E 457 .H57 v.3

Herndon, William Henry, 1818
-1891.

Herndon's Lincoln

From Mother
To Russell
Dec 25-th 1921

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_S0-AST-132

HERNDON'S LINCOLN

COPYRIGHT BY
THE HERNDON'S LINCOLN PUBLISHING CO.
1921

HERNDON'S LINCOLN

THE TRUE STORY OF A GREAT LIFE

Etiam in minimis major

THE HISTORY AND PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY

WILLIAM H. HERNDON

FOR TWENTY YEARS HIS FRIEND AND LAW PARTNER

AND

JESSE WILLIAM WEIK, A. M,

VOL. III

THE HERNDON'S LINCOLN PUBLISHING COMPANY

PUBLISHERS

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

ARCHBISHOP ALEMANY LIBRARY
DOMINICAN COLLEGE
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

L638h
v.3

These volumes are submitted as faithful reproductions of the original "Herndon's Lincoln". We have endeavored to make the body of the work conform, line for line and word for word, to the original.

THE PUBLISHERS.

88384

CHAPTER XIV.

Before Mr. Lincoln surrenders himself completely to the public—for it is apparent he is fast approaching the great crisis of his career—it may not be entirely inappropriate to take a nearer and more personal view of him. A knowledge of his personal views and actions, a glimpse through the doorway of his home, and a more thorough acquaintance with his marked and strong points as they developed, will aid us greatly in forming our general estimate of the man. When Mr. Lincoln entered the domain of investigation he was a severe and persistent thinker, and had wonderful endurance; hence he was abstracted, and for that reason at times was somewhat unsocial, reticent, and uncommunicative. After his marriage it cannot be said that he liked the society of ladies; in fact, it was just what he did not like, though one of his biographers says otherwise. Lincoln had none of the tender ways that please a woman, and he could not, it seemed, by any positive act of his own make her happy. If his wife was happy, she was naturally happy, or made herself so in spite of countless drawbacks. He was, however, a good husband in his own peculiar way, and in his own way only.

If exhausted from severe and long-continued

thought, he had to touch the earth again to renew his strength. When this weariness set in he would stop thought, and get down and play with a little dog or kitten to recover; and when the recovery came he would push it aside to play with its own tail. He treated men and women in much the same way. For fashionable society he had a marked dislike, although he appreciated its value in promoting the welfare of a man ambitious to succeed in politics. If he was invited out to dine or to mingle in some social gathering, and came in contact with the ladies, he treated them with becoming politeness; but the consciousness of his shortcomings as a society man rendered him unusually diffident, and at the very first opportunity he would have the men separated from their ladies and crowded close around him in one corner of the parlor, listening to one of his characteristic stories. That a lady* as proud and as ambitious to exercise the rights of supremacy in society as Mary Todd should repent of her marriage to the man I have just described surely need occasion no surprise in the mind of anyone. Both she and the man whose hand she accepted acted along the lines of human conduct, and both reaped the bitter harvest of conjugal infelicity. In dealing with Mr. Lincoln's home life perhaps I am revealing an element of his character that has here-

* Mrs. Lincoln was decidedly pro-slavery in her views. One day she was invited to take a ride with a neighboring family, some of whose members still reside in Springfield. "If ever my husband dies," she ejaculated during the ride, "his spirit will never find me living outside the limits of a slave State."

tofore been kept from the world; but in doing so I feel sure I am treading on no person's toes, for all the actors in this domestic drama are dead, and the world seems ready to hear the facts. As his married life, in the opinion of all his friends, exerted a peculiar influence over Mr. Lincoln's political career there can be no impropriety, I apprehend, in throwing the light on it now. Mrs. Lincoln's disposition and nature have been dwelt upon in another chapter, and enough has been told to show that one of her greatest misfortunes was her inability to control her temper. Admit that, and everything can be explained. However cold and abstracted her husband may have appeared to others, however impressive, when aroused, may have seemed his indignation in public, he never gave vent to his feelings at home. He always meekly accepted as final the authority of his wife in all matters of domestic concern.* This may explain somewhat the statement of Judge Davis that, "as a general rule, when all the lawyers of a Saturday evening would go home and see their families and friends, Lincoln would find some excuse and refuse to go. We said nothing, but it seemed to us all he was not domestically happy." He exercised no government of any kind over his household. His children did much as

* One day a man making some improvements in Lincoln's yard suggested to Mrs. Lincoln the propriety of cutting down one of the trees, to which she willingly assented. Before doing so, however, the man came down to our office and consulted Lincoln himself about it. "What did Mrs. Lincoln say?" enquired the latter. "She consented to have it taken away." "Then, in God's name," exclaimed Lincoln, "cut it down to the roots!"

they pleased. Many of their antics he approved, and he restrained them in nothing. He never reproved them or gave them a fatherly frown. He was the most indulgent parent I have ever known. He was in the habit, when at home on Sunday, of bringing his two boys, Willie and Thomas—or "Tad"—down to the office to remain while his wife attended church. He seldom accompanied her there. The boys were absolutely unrestrained in their amusement. If they pulled down all the books from the shelves, bent the points of all the pens, overturned inkstands, scattered lawpapers over the floor, or threw the pencils into the spittoon, it never disturbed the serenity of their father's good-nature. Frequently absorbed in thought, he never observed their mischievous but destructive pranks—as his unfortunate partner did, who thought much, but said nothing—and, even if brought to his attention, he virtually encouraged their repetition by declining to show any substantial evidence of parental disapproval. After church was over the boys and their father, climbing down the office stairs, ruefully turned their steps homeward. They mingled with the throngs of well-dressed people returning from church, the majority of whom might well have wondered if the trio they passed were going to a fireside where love and white-winged peace reigned supreme. A near relative of Mrs. Lincoln, in explanation of the unhappy condition of things in that lady's household, offered this suggestion:

"Mrs. Lincoln came of the best stock, and was raised like a lady. Her husband was her opposite,

in origin, in education, in breeding, in everything; and it is therefore quite natural that she should complain if he answered the door-bell himself instead of sending the servant to do so; neither is she to be condemned if, as you say, she raised 'merry war' because he persisted in using his own knife in the butter, instead of the silver-handled one intended for that purpose."* Such want of social polish on the part of her husband of course gave Mrs. Lincoln great offense, and therefore in commenting on it she cared neither for time nor place. Her frequent outbursts of temper precipitated many an embarrassment from which Lincoln with great difficulty extricated himself.

Mrs. Lincoln, on account of her peculiar nature, could not long retain a servant in her employ. The sea was never so placid but that a breeze would ruffle its waters. She loved show and attention, and if, when she glorified her family descent or indulged in one of her strange outbreaks, the servant could simulate absolute obsequiousness or had tact enough to encourage the social pretensions, Mrs.

---

* A lady relative who lived for two years with the Lincolns told me that Mr. Lincoln was in the habit of lying on the floor with the back of a chair for a pillow when he read. One evening, when in this position in the hall, a knock was heard at the front door and although in his shirt-sleeves he answered the call. Two ladies were at the door whom he invited into the parlor, notifying them in his open familiar way, that he would "trot the women folks out." Mrs. Lincoln from an adjoining room witnessed the ladies' entrance and overheard her husband's jocose expression. Her indignation was so instantaneous she made the situation exceedingly interesting for him, and he was glad to retreat from the mansion. He did not return till very late at night and then slipped quietly in at a rear door.

Lincoln was for the time her firmest friend. One servant, who adjusted herself to suit the lady's capricious ways, lived with the family for several years. She told me that at the time of the debate between Douglas and Lincoln she often heard the latter's wife boast that she would yet be mistress of the White House. The secret of her ability to endure the eccentricities of her mistress came out in the admission that Mr. Lincoln gave her an extra dollar each week on condition that she would brave whatever storms might arise, and suffer whatever might befall her, without complaint. It was a rather severe condition, but she lived rigidly up to her part of the contract. The money was paid secretly and without the knowledge of Mrs. Lincoln. Frequently, after tempestuous scenes between the mistress and her servant, Lincoln at the first opportunity would place his hand encouragingly on the latter's shoulder with the admonition, "Mary, keep up your courage." It may not be without interest to add that the servant afterwards married a man who enlisted in the army. In the spring of 1865 his wife managed to reach Washington to secure her husband's release from the service. After some effort she succeeded in obtaining an interview with the President. He was glad to see her, gave her a basket of fruit, and directed her to call the next day and obtain a pass through the lines and money to buy clothes for herself and children. That night he was assassinated.

The following letter to the editor of a newspaper in Springfield will serve as a specimen of the per-

plexities which frequently beset Mr. Lincoln when his wife came in contact with others. What in this instance she said to the paper carrier we do not know; we can only intelligently infer. I have no personal recollection of the incident, although I knew the man to whom it was addressed quite well. The letter only recently came to light. I insert it without further comment.

[Private.]

"SPRINGFIELD, ILL., February 20, 1857.

"JOHN E. ROSETTE, ESQ.

"DEAR SIR:—Your note about the little paragraph in the Republican was received yesterday, since which time I have been too unwell to notice it. I had not supposed you wrote or approved it. The whole originated in mistake. You know by the conversation with me that I thought the establishment of the paper unfortunate, but I always expected to throw no obstacle in its way, and to patronize it to the extent of taking and paying for one copy. When the paper was brought to my house, my wife said to me, 'Now are you going to take another worthless little paper?' I said to her *evasively,* 'I have not directed the paper to be left.' From this, in my absence, she sent the message to the carrier. This is the whole story.

"Yours truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

A man once called at the house to learn why Mrs. Lincoln had so unceremoniously discharged his niece from her employ. Mrs. Lincoln met him at the door, and being somewhat wrought up, gave vent to her feelings, resorting to such violent gest-

ures and emphatic language that the man was glad to beat a hasty retreat. He at once started out to find Lincoln, determined to exact from him proper satisfaction for his wife's action. Lincoln was entertaining a crowd in a store at the time. The man, still laboring under some agitation, called him to the door and made the demand. Lincoln listened for a moment to his story. "My friend," he interrupted, "I regret to hear this, but let me ask you in all candor, can't you endure for a few moments what I have had as my daily portion for the last fifteen years?" These words were spoken so mournfully and with such a look of distress that the man was completely disarmed. It was a case that appealed to his feelings. Grasping the unfortunate husband's hand, he expressed in no uncertain terms his sympathy, and even apologized for having approached him. He said no more about the infuriated wife, and Lincoln afterward had no better friend in Springfield.

Mr. Lincoln never had a confidant, and therefore never unbosomed himself to others. He never spoke of his trials to me or, so far as I knew, to any of his friends. It was a great burden to carry, but he bore it sadly enough and without a murmur. I could always realize when he was in distress, without being told. He was not exactly an early riser, that is, he never usually appeared at the office till about nine o'clock in the morning. I usually preceded him an hour. Sometimes, however, he would come down as early as seven o'clock—in fact, on one occasion I remember he came down

before daylight. If, on arriving at the office, I found him in, I knew instantly that a breeze had sprung up over the domestic sea, and that the waters were troubled. He would either be lying on the lounge looking skyward, or doubled up in a chair with his feet resting on the sill of a back window. He would not look up on my entering, and only anwered my "Good morning" with a grunt. I at once busied myself with pen and paper, or ran through the leaves of some book; but the evidence of his melancholy and distress was so plain, and his silence so significant, that I would grow restless myself, and finding some excuse to go to the court-house or elsewhere, would leave the room.

The door of the office opening into a narrow hall-way was half glass, with a curtain on it working on brass rings strung on wire. As I passed out on these occasions I would draw the curtain across the glass, and before I reached the bottom of the stairs I could hear the key turn in the lock, and Lincoln was alone in his gloom. An hour in the clerk's office at the court-house, an hour longer in a neighboring store having passed, I would return. By that time either a client had dropped in and Lincoln was propounding the law, or else the cloud of despondency had passed away, and he was busy in the recital of an Indiana story to whistle off the recollections of the morning's gloom. Noon having arrived I would depart homeward for my dinner. Returning within an hour, I would find him still in the office,—although his house stood but a few squares away,—lunching on a slice of

cheese and a handful of crackers which, in my absence, he had brought up from a store below. Separating for the day at five or six o'clock in the evening, I would still leave him behind, either sitting on a box at the foot of the stairway, entertaining a few loungers, or killing time in the same way on the court-house steps. A light in the office after dark attested his presence there till late along in the night, when, after all the world had gone to sleep, the tall form of the man destined to be the nation's President could have been seen strolling along in the shadows of trees and buildings, and quietly slipping in through the door of a modest frame house, which it pleased the world, in a conventional way, to call his home.

Some persons may insist that this picture is too highly colored. If so, I can only answer, they do not know the facts. The majority of those who have a personal knowledge of them are persistent in their silence. If their lips could be opened and all could be known, my conclusions and statements, to say the least of them, would be found to be fair, reasonable, and true. A few words more as to Lincoln's domestic history, and I pass to a different phase of life. One of his warmest and closest friends, who still survives, maintains the theory that, after all, Lincoln's political ascendancy and final elevation to the Presidency were due more to the influence of his wife than to any other person or cause. "The fact," insists this friend, "that Mary Todd, by her turbulent nature and unfortunate manner, prevented her husband from becom-

ing a domestic man, operated largely in his favor; for he was thereby kept out in the world of business and politics. Instead of spending his evenings at home, reading the papers and warming his toes at his own fireside, he was constantly out with the common people, was mingling with the politicians, discussing public questions with the farmers who thronged the offices in the court-house and state house, and exchanging views with the loungers who surrounded the stove of winter evenings in the village store. The result of this continuous contact with the world was, that he was more thoroughly known than any other man in his community. His wife, therefore, was one of the unintentional means of his promotion. If, on the other hand, he had married some less ambitious but more domestic woman, some honest farmer's quiet daughter,—one who would have looked up to and worshipped him because he uplifted her,—the result might have been different. For, although it doubtless would have been her pride to see that he had clean clothes whenever he needed them; that his slippers were always in their place; that he was warmly clad and had plenty to eat; and, although the privilege of ministering to his every wish and whim might have been to her a pleasure rather than a duty; yet I fear he would have been buried in the pleasures of a loving home, and the country would never have had Abraham Lincoln for its President."

In her domestic troubles I have always sympathized with Mrs. Lincoln. The world does not

know what she bore, or how ill-adapted she was to bear it. Her fearless, witty, and austere nature shrank instinctively from association with the calm, imperturbable, and simple ways of her thoughtful and absent-minded husband. Besides, who knows but she may have acted out in her conduct toward her husband the laws of human revenge? The picture of that eventful evening in 1841, when she stood at the Edwards mansion clad in her bridal robes, the feast prepared and the guests gathered, and when the bridegroom came not, may have been constantly before her, and prompted her to a course of action which kept in the background the better elements of her nature. In marrying Lincoln she did not look so far into the future as Mary Owens, who declined his proposal because "he was deficient in those little links which made up the chain of woman's happiness."*

* Mrs. Lincoln died at the residence of her sister Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards, in Springfield, July 16, 1882. Her physician during her last illness says this of her: "In the late years of her life certain mental peculiarities were developed which finally culminated in a sight apoplexy, producing paralysis, of which she died. Among the peculiarities alluded to, one of the most singular was the habit she had during the last year or so of her life of immuring herself in a perfectly dark room and, for light, using a small candle-light, even when the sun was shining bright out-of-doors. No urging would induce her to go out into the fresh air. Another peculiarity was the accumulation of large quantities of silks and dress goods in trunks and by the cart-load, which she never used and which accumulated until it was really feared that the floor of the store-room would give way. She was bright and sparkling in conversation, and her memory remained singularly good up to the very close of her life. Her face was animated and pleasing; and to me she was always an interesting woman; and while the whole world was

By reason of his practical turn of mind Mr. Lincoln never speculated any more in the scientific and philosophical than he did in the financial world. He never undertook to fathom the intricacies of psychology and metaphysics.* Investigation into first causes, abstruse mental phenomena, the science of being, he brushed aside as trash—mere scientific absurdities. He discovered through experience that his mind, like the minds of other men, had its limitations, and hence he economized his forces and his time by applying his powers in the field of the practical. Scientifically regarded he was a realist as opposed to an idealist, a sensationist as opposed to an intuitionist, a materialist as opposed to a spiritualist.

There was more or less superstition in his nature, and, although he may not have believed implicitly in the signs of his many dreams, he was constantly endeavoring to unravel them. His mind was readily impressed with some of the most absurd superstitions. His visit to the Voodoo fortune-

---

finding fault with her temper and disposition, it was clear to me that the trouble was really a cerebral disease."—Dr. Thomas W. Dresser, letter, January 3, 1889, MS.

* "He was contemplative rather than speculative. He wanted something solid to rest upon, and hence his bias for mathematics and the physical sciences. He bestowed more attention on them than upon metaphysical speculations. I have heard him descant upon the problem whether a ball discharged from a gun in a horizontal position would be longer in reaching the ground than one dropped at the instant of discharge from the muzzle. He said it always appeared to him that they would both reach the ground at the same time, even before he had read the philosophical explanation."—Joseph Gillespie, letter, December 8, 1866, MS.

teller in New Orleans in 1831; his faith in the virtues of the mad-stone, when he took his son Robert to Terre Haute, Indiana, to be cured of the bite of a rabid dog; and the strange double image of himself which he told his secretary, John Hay, he saw reflected in a mirror just after his election in 1860, strongly attest his inclination to superstition. He held most firmly to the doctrine of fatalism all his life. His wife, after his death, told me what I already knew, that "his only philosophy was, what is to be will be, and no prayers of ours can reverse the decree." He always contended that he was doomed to a sad fate, and he repeatedly said to me when we were alone in our office: "I am sure I shall meet with some terrible end." In proof of his strong leaning towards fatalism he once quoted the case of Brutus and Caesar, arguing that the former was forced by laws and conditions over which he had no control to kill the latter, and, *vice versa,* that the latter was specially created to be disposed of by the former. This superstitious view of life ran through his being like the thin blue vein through the whitest marble, giving the eye rest from the weariness of continued unvarying color.*

For many years I subscribed for and kept on our office table the *Westminster* and *Edinburgh Review* and a number of other English periodicals. Besides them I purchased the works of Spencer, Darwin,

---

* I have heard him frequently quote the couplet,
"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

and the utterances of other English scientists, all of which I devoured with great relish. I endeavored, but had little success in inducing Lincoln to read them. Occasionally he would snatch one up and peruse it for a little while, but he soon threw it down with the suggestion that it was entirely too heavy for an ordinary mind to digest.* A gentleman in Springfield gave him a book called, I believe, "Vestiges of Creation," which interested him so much that he read it through. The volume was pub-

---

* In 1856 I purchased in New York a life of Edmund Burke. I have forgotten now who the author was, but I remember I read it through in a short time. One morning Lincoln came into the office and, seeing the book in my hands, enquired what I was reading. I told him, at the same time observing that it was an excellent work and handing the book over to him. Taking it in his hand he threw himself down on the office sofa and hastily ran over its pages, reading a little here and there. At last he closed and threw it on the table with the exclamation, "No, I've read enough of it. It's like all the others. Biographies as generally written are not only misleading, but false. The author of this life of Burke makes a wonderful hero out of his subject. He magnifies his perfections—if he had any—and suppresses his imperfections. He is so faithful in his zeal and so lavish in praise of his every act that one is almost driven to believe that Burke never made a mistake or a failure in his life." He lapsed into a brown study, but presently broke out again, "Billy, I've wondered why book-publishers and merchants don't have blank biographies on their shelves, always ready for an emergency; so that, if a man happens to die, his heirs or his friends, if they wish to perpetuate his memory, can purchase one already written, but with blanks. These blanks they can at their pleasure fill up with rosy sentences full of high-sounding praise. In most instances they commemorate a lie, and cheat posterity out of the truth. History," he concluded, "is not history unless it is the truth." This emphatic avowal of sentiment from Mr. Lincoln not only fixes his estimate of ordinary biography, but is my vindication in advance if assailed for telling the truth.

lished in Edinburgh, and undertook to demonstrate the doctrine of development or evolution. The treatise interested him greatly, and he was deeply impressed with the notion of the so-called "universal law"—evolution; he did not extend greatly his researches, but by continued thinking in a single channel seemed to grow into a warm advocate of the new doctrine. Beyond what I have stated he made no further investigation into the realm of philosophy. "There are no accidents," he said one day, "in my philosophy. Every effect must have its cause. The past is the cause of the present, and the present will be the cause of the future. All these are links in the endless chain stretching from the finite to the infinite." From what has been said it would follow logically that he did not believe, except in a very restricted sense, in the freedom of the will. We often argued the question, I taking the opposite view: he changed the expression, calling it the freedom of the mind, and insisted that man always acted from a motive. I once contended that man was free and could act without a motive. He smiled at my philosophy, and answered that it was impossible, because the motive was born before the man."

The foregoing thoughts are prefatory to the much-mooted question of Mr. Lincoln's religious belief. For what I have heretofore said on this subject, both in public lectures and in letters which have frequently found their way into the newspapers, I have been freely and sometimes bitterly assailed, but I do not intend now to reopen the discussion

or to answer the many persons who have risen up and asked to measure swords with me. I merely purpose to state the bare facts, expressing no opinion of my own, and allowing each and every one to put his or her construction on them.

Inasmuch as he was so often a candidate for public office Mr. Lincoln said as little about his religious opinions as possible, especially if he failed to coincide with the orthodox world. In illustration of his religious code I once heard him say that it was like that of an old man named Glenn, in Indiana, whom he heard speak at a church meeting, and who said: "When I do good I feel good, when I do bad I feel bad, and that's my religion."

In 1834, while still living in New Salem and before he became a lawyer, he was surrounded by a class of people exceedingly liberal in matters of religion. Volney's "Ruins" and Paine's "Age of Reason" passed from hand to hand, and furnished food for the evening's discussion in the tavern and village store. Lincoln read both these books and thus assimilated them into his own being. He prepared an extended essay—called by many, a book—in which he made an argument against Christianity, striving to prove that the Bible was not inspired, and therefore not God's revelation, and that Jesus Christ was not the son of God. The manuscript containing these audacious and comprehensive propositions he intended to have published or given a wide circulation in some other way. He carried it to the store, where it was read and freely discussed. His

friend and employer, Samuel Hill, was among the listeners, and, seriously questioning the propriety of a promising young man like Lincoln fathering such unpopular notions, he snatched the manuscript from his hands and thrust it into the stove. The book went up in flames, and Lincoln's political future was secure. But his infidelity and his sceptical views were not diminished. He soon removed to Springfield, where he attracted considerable notice by his rank doctrine. Much of what he then said may properly be credited to the impetuosity and exuberance of youth. One of his closest friends, whose name is withheld, narrating scenes and reviewing discussions that in 1838 took place in the office of the county clerk, says: "Sometimes Lincoln bordered on atheism. He went far that way, and shocked me. I was then a young man, and believed what my good mother told me . . . . He would come into the clerk's office where I and some young men were writing and staying, and would bring the Bible with him; would read a chapter and argue against it . . . . Lincoln was enthusiastic in his infidelity. As he grew older he grew more discreet; didn't talk much before strangers about his religion; but to friends, close and bosom ones, he was always open and avowed, fair and honest; to strangers, he held them off from policy." John T. Stuart, who was Lincoln's first partner, substantially endorses the above. "He was an avowed and open infidel," declares Stuart, "and sometimes bordered on atheism; . . . . went further against Christian beliefs and doctrines and principles than any man I ever heard;

he shocked me. I don't remember the exact line of his argument; suppose it was against the inherent defects, so-called, of the Bible, and on grounds of reason. Lincoln always denied that Jesus was the Christ of God—denied that Jesus was the son of God as understood and maintained by the Christian Church." David Davis tells us this: "The idea that Lincoln talked to a stranger about his religion or religious views, or made such speeches and remarks about it as are published, is to me absurd. I knew the man so well; he was the most reticent, secretive man I ever saw or expect to see. He had no faith, in the Christian sense of the term—had faith in laws, principles, causes and effects." Another man* testifies as follows: "Mr. Lincoln told me that he was a kind of immortalist; that he never could bring himself to believe in eternal punishment; that man lived but a little while here; and that if eternal punishment were man's doom, he should spend that little life in vigilant and ceaseless preparation by never-ending prayer." Another intimate friend† furnishes this: "In my intercourse with Mr. Lincoln I learned that he believed in a Creator of all things, who had neither beginning nor end, possessing all power and wisdom, established a principle in obedience to which worlds move and are upheld, and animal and vegetable life come into existence. A reason he gave for his belief was that in view of the order and harmony of all nature which we behold, it would have been more miraculous to have come about by

* William H. Hannah. † I. W. Keys.

chance than to have been created and arranged by some great thinking power. As to the Christian theory that Christ is God or equal to the Creator, he said that it had better be taken for granted; for by the test of reason we might become infidels on that subject, for evidence of Christ's divinity came to us in a somewhat doubtful shape; but that the system of Christianity was an ingenious one at least, and perhaps was calculated to do good." Jesse W. Fell, to whom Lincoln first confided the details of his biography, furnishes a more elaborate account of the latter's religious views than anyone else. In a statement made September 22, 1870, Fell says: "If there were any traits of character that stood out in bold relief in the person of Mr. Lincoln they were those of truth and candor. He was utterly incapable of insincerity or professing views on this or any other subject he did not entertain. Knowing such to be his true character, that insincerity, much more duplicity, were traits wholly foreign to his nature, many of his old friends were not a little surprised at finding in some of the biographies of this great man statements concerning his religious opinions so utterly at variance with his known sentiments. True, he may have changed or modified these sentiments*

---

* "EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, May 27, 1865.

"FRIEND HERNDON:

"Mr Lincoln did not to my knowledge in any way change his religious ideas, opinions, or beliefs from the time he left Springfield to the day of his death. I do not know just what they were, never having heard him explain them in detail; but I am very sure he gave no outward indication of his mind having undergone any change in that regard while here.

"Yours truly,

"JNO. G. NICOLAY."

after his removal from among us, though this is hardly reconcilable with the history of the man, and his entire devotion to public matters during his four years' residence at the national capital. It is possible, however, that this may be the proper solution of this conflict of opinions; or it may be that, with no intention on the part of any one to mislead the public mind, those who have represented him as believing in the popular theological views of the times may have misapprehended him, as experience shows to be quite common where no special effort has been made to attain critical accuracy on a subject of this nature. This is the more probable from the well-known fact, that Mr. Lincoln seldom communicated to any one his views on this subject; but be this as it may, I have no hesitation whatever in saying that whilst he held many opinions in common with the great mass of Christian believers, he did not believe in what are regarded as the orthodox or evangelical views of Christianity.

"On the innate depravity of man, the character and office of the great Head of the Church, the atonement, the infallibility of the written revelation, the performance of miracles, the nature and design of present and future rewards and punishments (as they are popularly called), and many other subjects he held opinions utterly at variance with what are usually taught in the Church. I should say that his expressed views on these and kindred topics were such as, in the estimation of most believers, would place him outside the Christian pale. Yet, to my mind, such was not the

true position, since his principles and practices and the spirit of his whole life were of the very kind we universally agree to call Christian; and I think this conclusion is in no wise affected by the circumstance that he never attached himself to any religious society whatever.

"His religious views were eminently practical, and are summed up, as I think, in these two propositions: the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. He fully believed in a superintending and overruling Providence that guides and controls the operations of the world, but maintained that law and order, and not their violation or suspension, are the appointed means by which this Providence is exercised.*

"I will not attempt any specification of either his belief or disbelief on various religious topics, as derived from the conversations with him at different times during a considerable period; but as conveying a general view of his religious or theological opinions, will state the following facts. Some eight or ten years prior to his death, in conversing with him upon this subject, the writer took occasion to refer, in terms of approbation, to the sermons and writings generally of Dr. W. E. Channing; and, find-

* "A convention of preachers held, I think, at Philadelphia, passed a resolution asking him to recommend to Congress an amendment to the Constitution directly recognizing the existence of God. The first draft of his message prepared after this resolution was sent him did contain a paragraph calling the attention of Congress to the subject. When I assisted him in reading the proof he struck it out, remarking that he had not made up his mind as to its propriety."—MS. letter, John D. Defrees, December 4, 1866.

ing he was considerably interested in the statement I made of the opinions held by that author, I proposed to present him (Lincoln) a copy of Channing's entire works, which I soon after did. Subsequently the contents of these volumes, together with the writings of Theodore Parker, furnished him, as he informed me, by his friend and law partner, William H. Herndon, became naturally the topics of conversation with us; and, though far from believing there was an entire harmony of views on his part with either of those authors, yet they were generally much admired and approved by him.

"No religious views with him seemed to find any favor except of the practical and rationalistic order; and if, from my recollections on this subject, I was called upon to designate an author whose views most nearly represented Mr. Lincoln's on this subject, I would say that author was Theodore Parker."

The last witness to testify before this case is submitted to the reader is no less a person than Mrs. Lincoln herself. In a statement made at a time and under circumstances detailed in a subsequent chapter she said this: "Mr. Lincoln had no faith and no hope in the usual acceptation of those words. He never joined a Church; but still, as I believe, he was a religious man by nature. He first seemed to think about the subject when our boy Willie died, and then more than ever about the time he went to Gettysburg; but it was a kind of poetry in his nature, and he was never a technical Christian."

No man had a stronger or firmer faith in Providence—God—than Mr. Lincoln, but the continued

use by him late in life of the word God must not be interpreted to mean that he believed in a personal God. In 1854 he asked me to erase the word God from a speech which I had written and read to him for criticism because my language indicated a personal God, whereas he insisted no such personality ever existed.

My own testimony, however, in regard to Mr. Lincoln's religious views may perhaps invite discussion. The world has always insisted on making an orthodox Christian of him, and to analyze his sayings or sound his beliefs is but to break the idol. It only remains to say that, whether orthodox or not, he believed in God and immortality; and even if he questioned the existence of future eternal punishment he hoped to find a rest from trouble and a heaven beyond the grave. If at any time in his life he was sceptical of the divine origin of the Bible he ought not for that reason to be condemned; for he accepted the practical precepts of that great book as binding alike upon his head and his conscience. The benevolence of his impulses, the seriousness of his convictions, and the nobility of his character are evidences unimpeachable that his soul was ever filled with the exalted purity and sublime faith of natural religion.

CHAPTER XV.

The result of the campaign of 1858 wrought more disaster to Lincoln's finances than to his political prospects. The loss of over six months from his business, and expenses of the canvass, made a severe drain on his personal income. He was anxious to get back to the law once more and earn a little ready money. A letter written about this time to his friend Norman B. Judd, Chairman of the Republican State Committee, will serve to throw some light on the situation he found himself in. "I have been on expenses so long, without earning anything," he says, "that I am absolutely without money now for even household expenses. Still, if you can put in $250 for me towards discharging the debt of the committee, I will allow it when you and I settle the private matter between us. This, with what I have already paid, with an outstanding note of mine, will exceed my subscription of $500. This, too, is exclusive of my ordinary expenses during the campaign, all of which, being added to my loss of time and business, bears prettily heavily upon one no better off than I am. But as I had the post of honor, it is not for me to be over-nice." At the time this letter was written his property consisted of the house and lot on

which he lived, a few law books and some household furniture. He owned a small tract of land in Iowa which yielded him nothing, and the annual income from his law practice did not exceed $3,000; yet the party's committee in Chicago were dunning their late standard-bearer, who, besides the chagrin of his defeat, his own expenses, and the sacrifice of his time, was asked to aid in meeting the general expenses of the campaign. At this day one is a little surprised that some of the generous and wealthy members of the party in Chicago or elsewhere did not come forward and volunteer their aid. But they did not, and whether Lincoln felt in his heart the injustice of this treatment or not, he went straight ahead in his own path and said nothing about it.

Political business being off his hands, he now conceived the idea of entering the lecture field. He began preparations in the usual way by noting down ideas on stray pieces of paper, which found a lodgment inside his hat, and finally brought forth in connected form a lecture on "Inventions." He recounted the wonderful improvements in machinery, the arts, and sciences. Now and then he indulged in a humorous paragraph, and witticisms were freely sprinkled throughout the lecture. During the winter he delivered it at several towns in the central part of the State, but it was so commonplace, and met with such indifferent success, that he soon dropped it altogether.* The effort met with

* "As we were going to Danville court I read to Lincoln a lecture by Bancroft on the wonderful progress of man, delivered

the disapproval of his friends, and he himself was filled with disgust. If his address in 1852, over the death of Clay, proved that he was no eulogist, then this last effort demonstrated that he was no lecturer. Invitations to deliver the lecture—prompted no doubt by the advertisement given him in the contest with Douglas—came in very freely; but beyond the three attempts named, he declined them all. "Press of business in the courts" afforded him a convenient excuse, and he retired from the field.*

During the fall of 1859 invitations to take part in the canvass came from over half-a-dozen States where elections were to be held, Douglas, fresh from the Senate, had gone to Ohio, and thither in September Lincoln, in response to the demands of party friends everywhere, followed.† He delivered

---

in the preceding November. Sometime later he told us—Swett and me—that he had been thinking much on the subject and believed he would write a lecture on 'Man and His Progress.' Afterwards I read in a paper that he had come to either Bloomington or Clinton to lecture and no one turned out. The paper added, 'That doesn't look much like his being President.' I once joked him about it; he said good-naturedly, 'Don't; that plagues me.' "—Henry C. Whitney, letter, Aug. 27, 1867, MS.

* "SPRINGFIELD, March 28, 1859.

"W. M. MORRIS, Esq.,

"DEAR SIR:—Your kind note inviting me to deliver a lecture at Galesburg is received. I regret to say I cannot do so now; I must stick to the courts awhile. I read a sort of lecture to three different audiences during the last month and this; but I did so under circumstances which made it a waste of no time whatever.

"Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

† "He returned to the city two years after with a fame as wide as the continent, with the laurels of the Douglas contest on his brow, and the Presidency in his grasp. He returned,

telling and impressive speeches at Cincinnati and Columbus,* following Douglas at both places. He made such a favorable impression among his Ohio friends that, after a glorious Republican victory, the State committee asked the privilege of publishing his speeches, along with those of Douglas, to be used and distributed as a campaign document. This request he especially appreciated, because after some effort he had failed to induce any publisher in

---

greeted with the thunder of cannon, the strains of martial music, and the joyous plaudits of thousands of citizens thronging the streets. He addressed a vast concourse on Fifth Street Market; was entertained in princely style at the Burnet House, and there received with courtesy the foremost citizens come to greet this rising star. With high hope and happy heart he left Cincinnati after a three days' sojourn. But a perverse fortune attended him and Cincinnati in their intercourse. Nine months after Mr. Lincoln left us, after he had been nominated for the Presidency, when he was tranquilly waiting in his cottage home at Springfield the verdict of the people, his last visit to Cincinnati and the good things he had had at the Burnet House were rudely brought to his memory by a bill presented to him from its proprietors. Before leaving the hotel he had applied to the clerk for his bill; was told that it was paid, or words to that effect. This the committee had directed, but afterwards neglected its payment. The proprietors shrewdly surmised that a letter to the nominee for the Presidency would bring the money. The only significance in this incident is in the letter it brought from Mr. Lincoln, revealing his indignation at the seeming imputation against his honor, and his greater indigation at one item of the bill. 'As to wines, liquors, and cigars, we had none, absolutely none. These last may have been in Room 15 by order of committee, but I do not recollect them at all.'"—W. M. Dickson, "Harper's Magazine," June, 1884.

* Douglas had written a long and carefully prepared article on "Popular Sovereignty in the Territories," which appeared for the first time in the September (1859) number of "Harper's Magazine." It went back some distance into the history of the government, recounting the proceedings of the earliest Con-

Springfield to undertake the enterprise,* thus proving anew that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." In December he visited Kansas, speaking at Atchison, Troy, Leavenworth, and other towns near the border. His speeches there served to extend his reputation still further westward. Though his arguments were repetitions of the doctrine laid down in the contest with Douglas, yet they were new to the majority of his Kansas†

---

gresses, and sought to mark out more clearly than had heretofore been done "the dividing line between Federal and Local authority." In a speech at Columbus, O., Lincoln answered the "copy-right essay" categorically. After alluding to the difference of position between himself and Judge Douglas on the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty, he said: "Judge Douglas has had a good deal of trouble with Popular Sovereignty. His explanations, explanatory of explanations explained, are interminable. The most lengthy and, as I suppose, the most maturely considered of his long series of explanations is his great essay in "Harper's Magazine."

* A gentleman is still living, who at the time of the debate between Lincoln and Douglas, was a book publisher in Springfield. Lincoln had collected newspaper slips of all the speeches made during the debate, and proposed to him their publication in book form; but the man declined, fearing there would be no demand for such a book. Subsequently, when the speeches were gotten out in book form in Ohio, Mr. Lincoln procured a copy and gave it to his Springfield friend, writing on the fly-leaf, "Compliments of A. Lincoln."

† How Mr. Lincoln stood on the questions of the hour, after his defeat by Douglas, is clearly shown in a letter written on the 14th of May, 1859, to a friend in Kansas, who had forwarded him an invitation to attend a Republican convention there. "You will probably adopt resolutions," he writes, "in the nature of a platform. I think the only danger will be the temptation to lower the Republican standard in order to gather recruits. In my judgment such a step would be a serious mistake, and open a gap through which more would pass out than pass in. And this would be the same whether the letting down should be in deference to Douglasism or to the Southern

hearers and were enthusiastically approved. By the close of the year he was back again in the dingy law office in Springfield.

The opening of the year 1860 found Mr. Lincoln's name freely mentioned in connection with the Republican nomination for the Presidency. To be classed with Seward, Chase, McLean, and other celebrities was enough to stimulate any Illinois lawyer's pride; but in Mr. Lincoln's case, if it had any such effect, he was most artful in concealing it. Now and then some ardent friend, an editor, for example, would run his name up to the mast-head, but in all cases he discouraged the attempt. "In regard to the matter you spoke of," he answered one man who proposed his name, "I beg that you will not give it a further mention. Seriously, I do not think I am fit for the Presidency."*

The first effort in his behalf as a Presidential aspi-

---

opposition element; either would surrender the object of the Republican organization—the preventing of the spread and nationalization of slavery. This object surrendered, the organization would go to pieces. I do not mean by this that no Southern man must be placed upon our national ticket for 1860. There are many men in the slave states for any one of whom I could cheerfully vote, to be either President or Vice-President, provided he would enable me to do so with safety to the Republican cause, without lowering the Republican standard. This is the indispensable condition of a union with us; it is idle to talk of any other. Any other would be as fruitless to the South as distasteful to the North, the whole ending in common defeat. Let a union be attempted on the basis of ignoring the slavery question, and magnifying other questions which the people are just now caring about, and it will result in gaining no single electoral vote in the South, and losing every one in the North."—MS. letter to M. W. Delahay.

* Letter, March 5, 1859, to Thomas J. Pickett.

rant was the action taken by his friends at a meeting held in the State House early in 1860, in the rooms of O. M. Hatch, then Secretary of State. Besides Hatch there were present Norman B. Judd, chairman of the Republican State Committee, Ebenezer Peek, Jackson Grimshaw, and others of equal prominence in the party, "we all expressed a personal preference for Mr. Lincoln," relates one who was a participant in the meeting,* "as the Illinois candidate for the Presidency, and asked him if his name might be used at once in connection with the nomination and election. With his characteristic modesty he doubted whether he could get the nomination even if he wished it, and asked until the next morning to answer us whether his name might be announced. Late the next day he authorized us, if we thought proper to do so, to place him in the field." To the question from Mr. Grimshaw whether, if the nomination for President could not be obtained, he would accept the post of Vice-President, he answered that he would not; that his name having been used for the office of President, he would not permit it to be used for any other office, however honorable it might be. This meeting was preliminary to the Decatur convention, and was also the first concerted action in his behalf on the part of his friends.

In the preceding October he came rushing into the office one morning, with the letter from New York City, inviting him to deliver a lecture there, and

---

* Jackson Grimshaw. Letter, Quincy, Ill., April 28, 1866, MS.

asked my advice and that of other friends as to the subject and character of his address. We all recommended a speech on the political situation. Remembering his poor success as a lecturer himself, he adopted our suggestions. He accepted the invitation of the New York committee, at the same time notifying them that his speech would deal entirely with political questions, and fixing a day late in February as the most convenient time. Meanwhile he spent the intervening time in careful preparation. He searched through the dusty volumes of congressional proceedings in the State library, and dug deeply into political history. He was painstaking and thorough in the study of his subject, but when at last he left for New York we had many misgivings—and he not a few himself—of his success in the great metropolis. What effect the unpretentious Western lawyer would have on the wealthy and fashionable society of the great city could only be conjectured. A description of the meeting at Cooper Institute, a list of the names of the prominent men and women present, or an account of Lincoln in the delivery of the address would be needless repetitions of well-known history.* It only remains to say that his speech was

* On his return home Lincoln told me that for once in his life he was greatly abashed over his personal appearance. The new suit of clothes which he donned on his arrival in New York were ill-fitting garments, and showed the creases made while packed in the valise; and for a long time after he began his speech and before he became "warmed up" he imagined that the audience noticed the contract between his Western clothes and the neat-fitting suits of Mr. Bryant and others who sat on the platform. The collar of his coat on the right side

devoid of all rhetorical imagery, with a marked suppression of the pyrotechnics of stump oratory. It was constructed with a view to accuracy of statement, simplicity of language, and unity of thought. In some respects like a lawyer's brief, it was logical, temperate in tone, powerful—irresistibly driving conviction home to men's reasons and their souls. No former effort in the line of speech-making had cost Lincoln so much time and thought as this one. It is said by one of his biographers, that those afterwards engaged in getting out the speech as a campaign document were three weeks in verifying the statements and finding the historical records referred to and consulted by him. This is probably a little over-stated as to time, but unquestionbly the work of verification and reference was in any event a very labored and extended one.* The day following the Cooper Institute meeting, the leading New York dailies published the speech in full, and made favorable editorial mention of it and of the speaker as well. It was plain now that Lincoln had captured the metropolis. From New York he travelled to New England to visit his son Robert, who

---

had an unpleasant way of flying up whenever he raised his arm to gesticulate. He imagined the audience noticed that also. After the meeting closed, the newspaper reporters called for slips of his speech. This amused him, because he had no idea what slips were, and besides, didn't suppose the newspapers cared to print his speech verbatim.

* Mr. Lincoln obtained most of the facts of his Cooper Institute speech from Eliott's "Debates on the Federal Constitution." There were six volumes, which he gave to me when he went to Washington in 1861.

was attending college. In answer to the many calls and invitations which showered on him, he spoke at various places in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire. In all these places he not only left deep impressions of his ability, but he convinced New England of his intense earnestness in the great cause. The newspapers treated him with no little consideration. One paper* characterized his speech as one of "great fairness," delivered with "great apparent candor and wonderful interest. For the first half hour his opponents would agree with every word he uttered; and from that point he would lead them off little by little until it seemed as if he had got them all into his fold. He is far from prepossessing in personal appearance, and his voice is disagreeable; and yet he wins your attention from the start. He indulges in no flowers of rhetoric, no eloquent passages . . . . He displays more shrewdness, more knowledge of the masses of mankind than any public speaker we have heard since Long Jim Wilson left for California."

Lincoln's return to Springfield after his dazzling success in the East was the signal for earnest congratulations on the part of his friends. Seward was the great man of the day, but Lincoln had demonstrated to the satisfaction of his friends that he was tall enough and strong enough to measure swords with the Auburn statesman. His triumph in New York and New England had shown that the idea of a house divided against itself induced as strong

* Manchester *Mirror*.

coöperation and hearty support in prevention of a great wrong in the East as the famous "irrepressible conflict" attracted warriors to Seward's standard in the Mississippi valley. It was apparent now to Lincoln that the Presidential nomination was within his reach. He began gradually to lose his interest in the law and to trim his political sails at the same time. His recent success had stimulated his self-confidence to unwonted proportions. He wrote to influential party workers everywhere. I know the idea prevails that Lincoln sat still in his chair in Springfield, and that one of those unlooked-for tides in human affairs came along and cast the nomination into his lap; but any man who has had experience in such things knows that great political prizes are not obtained in that way. The truth is, Lincoln was as vigilant as he was ambitious, and there is no denying the fact that he understood the situation perfectly from the start. In the management of his own interests he was obliged to rely almost entirely on his own resources. He had no money with which to maintain a political bureau, and he lacked any kind of personal organization whatever. Seward had all these things, and, behind them all, a brilliant record in the United States Senate with which to dazzle his followers. But with all his prestige and experience the latter was no more adroit and no more untiring in pursuit of his ambition than the man who had just delivered the Cooper Institute speech. A letter written by Lincoln about this time to a friend in Kansas serves to illustrate his methods, and measures the extent

of his ambition. The letter is dated March 10, and is now in my possession. For obvious reasons I withhold the friend's name: "As to your kind wishes for myself," writes Lincoln, "allow me to say I cannot enter the ring on the money basis—first, because in the main it is wrong; and secondly, I have not and cannot get the money. I say in the main the use of money is wrong; but for certain objects in a political contest the use of some is both right and indispensable. With me, as with yourself, this long struggle has been one of great pecuniary loss. I now distinctly say this: If you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago I will furnish one hundred dollars to bear the expenses of the trip." There is enough in this letter to show that Lincoln was not only determined in his political ambition, but intensely practical as well. His eye was constantly fastened on Seward, who had already freely exercised the rights of leadership in the party. All other competitors he dropped out of the problem. In the middle of April he again writes his Kansas friend: "Reaching home last night I found yours of the 7th. You know I was recently in New England. Some of the acquaintances while there write me since the election that the close vote in Connecticut and the quasi-defeat in Rhode Island are a drawback upon the prospects of Governor Seward; and Trumbull writes Dubois to the same effect. Do not mention this as coming from me. Both these States are safe enough in the fall." But, while Seward may have lost ground near his home, he was acquiring strength in the West. He had

invaded the very territory Lincoln was intending to retain by virtue of his course in the contest with Douglas. Lincoln's friend in Kansas, instead of securing that delegation for him, had suffered the Seward men to outgeneral him, and the prospects were by no means flattering. "I see by the dispatches," writes Lincoln, in a burst of surprise, "that, since you wrote, Kansas has appointed delegates and instructed for Seward. Don't stir them up to anger, but come along to the convention and I will do as I said about expenses." Whether the friend ever accepted Lincoln's generous offer I do not know,* but it may not be without interest to state that within ten days after the latter's inauguration he appointed him to a Federal office with comfortable salary attached, and even asked for his preferences as to other contemplated appointments in his own State.† In the rapid, stirring scenes that

---

* This case illustrates quite forcibly Lincoln's weakness in dealing with individuals. This man I know had written Lincoln, promising to bring the Kansas delegation to Chicago for him if he would only pay his expenses. Lincoln was weak enough to make the promise, and yet such was his faith in the man that he appointed him to an important judicial position and gave him great prominence in other ways. What President or candidate for President would dare do such a thing now?

† The following is in my possession:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, March 13, 1861.

"——— ———, Esq.

"MY DEAR SIR:

"You will start for Kansas before I see you again; and when I saw you a moment this morning I forgot to ask you about some of the Kansas appointments, which I intended to do. If you care much about them you can write, as I think I shall not make the appointments just yet.

"Yours in haste,

"A. LINCOLN."

crowd upon each other from this time forward the individuality of Lincoln is easily lost sight of. He was so thoroughly interwoven in the issues before the people of Illinois that he had become a part of them. Among his colleagues at the bar he was no longer looked upon as the Circuit-Court lawyer of earlier days. To them it seemed as if the nation were about to lay its claim upon him. His tall form enlarged, until, to use a figurative expression, he could no longer pass through the door of our dingy office. Reference has already been made to the envy of his rivals at the bar, and the jealousy of his political contemporaries. Very few indeed were free from the degrading passion; but it made no difference in Lincoln's treatment of them. He was as generous and deferred to them as much as ever. The first public movement by the Illinois people in his interest was the action of the State convention, which met at Decatur on the 9th and 10th of May. It was at this convention that Lincoln's friend and cousin, John Hanks, brought in the two historic rails which both had made in the Sangamon bottom in 1830, and which served the double purpose of electrifying the Illinois people and kindling the fire of enthusiasm that was destined to sweep over the nation. In the words of an ardent Lincoln delegate. "These rails were to represent the issue in the coming contest between labor free and labor slave; between democracy and aristocracy. Little did I think," continues our jubilant and effusive friend, "of the mighty consequences of this little incident; little did I think that the tall, and angular, and bony

rail-splitter who stood in girlish diffidence bowing with awkward grace would fill the chair once filed by Washington, and that his name would echo in chants of praise along the corridor of all coming time." A week later the hosts were gathered for the great convention in Chicago. David Davis had rented rooms in the Tremont House and opened up "Lincoln's headquarters." I was not a delegate, but belonged to the contingent which had Lincoln's interests in charge. Judge Logan was the Springfield delegate, and to him Lincoln had given a letter authorizing the withdrawal of his name whenever his friends deemed such action necessary or proper. Davis was the active man, and had the business management in charge. If any negotiations were made, he made them. The convention was held in a monster building called the Wigwam. No one who has ever attempted a description of it has overdrawn its enthusiasm and exciting scenes. Amid all the din and confusion, the curbstone contentions, the promiscuous wrangling of delegates, the deafening roar of the assembled hosts, the contest narrowed down to a neck-and-neck race between the brilliant statesman of Auburn and the less pretentious, but manly rail-splitter from the Sangamon bottoms. With the proceedings of the convention the world is already well familiar. On the first ballot Seward led, but was closely followed by Lincoln; on the second Lincoln gained amazingly; on the third the race was an even one until the dramatic change by Carter, of Ohio, when Lincoln, swinging loose, swept grandly to the front. The cannon planted on the roof of the

Wigwam belched forth a boom across the Illinois prairies. The sound was taken up and reverberated from Maine to California. With the nomination of Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, the convention adjourned. The delegates—victorious and vanquished alike—turned their steps homeward, and the great campaign of 1860 had begun. The day before the nomination the editor of the Springfield *Journal* arrived in Chicago with a copy of the Missouri *Democrat,* in which Lincoln had marked three passages referring to Seward's position on the slavery question. On the margin of the paper he had written in pencil, "I agree with Seward in his 'Irrepressible Conflict,' but I do not endorse his 'Higher Law' doctrine." Then he added in words underscored. "Make no contracts that will bind me." This paper was brought into the room where Davis, Judd, Logan, and I were gathered, and was read to us. But Lincoln was down in Springfield, some distance away from Chicago, and could therefore not appreciate the gravity of the situation; at least so Davis argued, and, viewing it in that light, the latter went ahead with his negotiations. What the consequences of these deals were will appear later on. The news of his nomination found Lincoln at Springfield in the office of the *Journal.* Naturally enough he was nervous, restless, and laboring under more or less suppressed excitement. He had been tossing ball—a pastime frequently indulged in by the lawyers of that day, and had played a few games of billiards to keep down, as another has expressed it, "the unnatural excitement that threatened to

possess him." When the telegram containing the result of the last ballot came in, although apparently calm and undisturbed, a close observer could have detected in the compressed lip and serious countenance evidences of deep and unusual emotion. As the balloting progressed he had gone to the office of the *Journal,* and was sitting in a large arm-chair there when the news of his nomination came. What a line of scenes, stretching from the barren glade in Kentucky to the jubilant and enthusiastic throng in the Wigwam at Chicago, must have broken in upon his vision as he hastened from the newspaper office to "tell a little woman down the street the news!" In the evening his friends and neighbors called to congratulate him. He thanked them feelingly and shook them each by the hand. A day later the committee from the convention, with George Ashmun, of Massachusetts, at its head, called, and delivered formal notice of his nomination. This meeting took place at his house. His response was couched in polite and dignified language, and many of the committee, who now met him for the first time, departed with an improved impression of the new standard-bearer. A few days later he wrote his official letter of acceptance, in which he warmly endorsed the resolutions of the convention. His actions and utterances so far had begun to dissipate the erroneous notion prevalent in some of the more remote Eastern States, that he was more of a backwoods boor than a gentleman; but with the arrival of the campaign in dead earnest, people paid less attention to the can-

didates and more to the great issues at stake. Briefly stated, the Republican platform was a declaration that "the new dogma, that the Constitution carries slavery into all the Territories, is a dangerous political heresy, revolutionary in tendency and subversive of the peace and harmony of the country; that the normal condition of all the Territories is that of freedom; that neither Congress, the territorial legislature, nor any individual can give legal existence to slavery in any territory; that the opening of the slave trade would be a crime against humanity." Resolutions favoring a homestead law, river and harbor improvements, and the Pacific railroad were also included in the platform. With these the Republicans, as a lawyer would say, went to the country. The campaign which followed was one with few parallels in American history. There was not only the customary exultation and enthusiasm over candidates, but there was patient listening and hard thinking among the masses. The slavery question, it was felt, must soon be decided. Threats of disunion were the texts of many a campaign speech in the South: in fact, as has since been shown, a deep laid conspiracy to overthrow the Union was then forming, and was only awaiting the election of a Republican President to show its hideous head. The Democratic party was struggling under the demoralizing effects of a split, in which even the Buchanan administration had taken sides. Douglas, the nominee of one wing, in his desperation had entered into the canvass himself, making speeches with all the power and eloquence at his

command. The Republicans, cheered over the prospect, had joined hands with the Abolitionists, and both were marching to victory under the inspiration of Lincoln's sentiment, that "the further spread of slavery should be arrested, and it should be placed where the public mind shall rest in the belief of its ultimate extinction."

As the canvass advanced and waxed warm I tendered my services and made a number of speeches in the central part of the State. I remember, in the midst of a speech at Petersburg, and just as I was approaching an oratorical climax, a man out of breath came rushing up to me and thrust a message into my hand. I was somewhat frustrated and greatly alarmed, fearing it might contain news of some accident in my family; but great was my relief when I read it, which I did aloud. It was a message from Lincoln, telling me to be of good cheer, that Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana had gone Republican.*

These were then October States, and this was the first gun for the great cause. It created so much demonstration, such a burst of enthusiasm and confusion, that the crowd forgot they had any speaker; they ran yelling and hurrahing out of the hall, and I never succeeded in finishing the speech.

---

* The handwriting of the note was a little tremulous, showing that Lincoln was excited and nervous when he wrote it. Following is a copy of the original MS.:

"SPRINGFIELD, ILL., October 10, 1860.

"DEAR WILLIAM: I cannot give you details, but it is entirely certain that Pennsylvania and Indiana have gone Republican very largely. Pennsylvania 25,000, and Indiana 5,000 to 10,000. Ohio of course is safe. "Yours as ever,

"A. LINCOLN."

As soon as officially notified of his nomination* Mr. Lincoln moved his headquarters from our office to a room in the State House building, and there, with his secretary, John G. Nicolay, he spent the busy and exciting days of his campaign. Of course he attended to no law business, but still he loved to come to our office of evenings, and spend an hour with a few choice friends in a friendly privacy which was denied him at his public quarters. These were among the last meetings we had with Lincoln as our friend and fellow at the bar; and they are also the most delightful recollections any of us have retained of him.† At last the turmoil

---

* Following is Lincoln's letter of acceptance:

"SPRINGFIELD, ILL., June 23, 1860.

"SIR: I accept the nomination tendered me by the convention over which you presided, of which I am formally apprised in a letter of yourself and others, acting as a committee of the convention for that purpose. The declaration of principles which accompanies your letter meets my approval, and it shall be my care not to violate it or disregard it in any part. Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, and with due regard to the views and feelings of all who were represented in the convention, to the rights of all the states and territories and people of the nation, to the inviolability of the Constitution, and the perpetual union, prosperity, and harmony of all, I am most happy to coöperate for the practical success of the principles declared by the convention.

"Your obliged friend and fellow-citizen,

"HON. GEORGE ASHMUN." "ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

† One of what Lincoln regarded as the remarkable features of his canvass for President was the attitude of some of his neighbors in Springfield. A poll of the voters had been made in a little book and given to him. On running over the names he found that the greater part of the clergy of the city—in fact all but three—were against him. This depressed him somewhat, and he called in Dr. Newton Bateman, who as Superintendent of Public Instruction occupied the room adjoining his own in the State House, and whom he habitually addressed as "Mr. School-

and excitement and fatigue of the campaign were over: the enthusiastic political workers threw aside their campaign uniforms, the boys blew out their torches, and the voter approached the polls with his ballot. On the morning of election day I stepped in to see Mr. Lincoln, and was surprised to learn that he did not intend to cast his vote. I knew of course that he did so because of a feeling that the candidate for a Presidential office ought not to vote for his own electors; but when I suggested the plan of cutting off the Presidential electors and voting for the State officers, he was struck with the idea, and at last consented. His appearance at the polls, accompanied by Ward Lamon, the lamented young Ellsworth, and myself, was the occasion of no little surprise because of the general impression which prevailed that he did not intend to vote. The crowd around the polls opened a gap as the distinguished voter approached, and some even removed their hats as he deposited his ticket and announced in a subdued voice his name, "Abraham Lincoln."

The election was held on the 6th of November. The result showed a popular vote of 1,857,610 for Lincoln; 1,291,574 for Douglas; 850,022 for Breckenridge; and 646,124 for Bell. In the elec-

---

master." He commented bitterly on the attitude of the preachers and many of their followers, who, pretending to be believers in the Bible and God-fearing Christians, yet by their votes demonstrated that they cared not whether slavery was voted up or down. "God cares and humanity cares," he reflected, "and if they do not they surely have not read their Bible aright."

toral college Lincoln received 180 votes, Breckenridge 72, Bell 39, and Douglas 12.* Mr. Lincoln having now been elected, there remained, before taking up the reins of government, the details of his departure from Springfield, and the selection of a cabinet.

---

* Lincoln electors were chosen in seventeen of the free States, as follows: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, California, Oregon; and in one State,—New Jersey,—owing to a fusion between Democrats, Lincoln secured four and Douglas three of the electors. Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Texas went for Breckenridge; Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia for Bell; while Douglas secured only one entire State—Missouri.

CHAPTER XVI.

The election over, Mr. Lincoln scarcely had time enough to take a breath until another campaign and one equally trying, so far as a test of his constitution and nerves was concerned, as the one through which he had just passed, opened up before him. I refer to the siege of the cabinet-makers and office-seekers. It proved to be a severe and protracted strain and one from which there seemed to be no relief, as the President-elect of this renowned democratic Government is by custom and precedent expected to meet and listen to everybody who calls to see him. "Individuals, deputations, and delegations," says one of Mr. Lincoln's biographers, "from all quarters pressed in upon him in a manner that might have killed a man of less robust constitution. The hotels of Springfield were filled with gentlemen who came with light baggage and heavy schemes. The party had never been in office. A clean sweep of the 'ins' was expected, and all the 'outs' were patriotically anxious to take the vacant places. It was a party that had never fed; and it was voraciously hungry. Mr. Lincoln and Artemus Ward saw a great deal of fun in it; and in all human probability it was the fun alone that enabled Mr. Lincoln to bear it."

His own election of course disposed of any claims Illinois might have had to any further representation in the cabinet, but it afforded Mr. Lincoln no relief from the argumentative interviews and pressing claims of the endless list of ambitious statesmen in the thirty-two other states, who swarmed into Springfield from every point of the compass. He told each one of them a story, and even if he failed to put their names on his slate they went away without knowing that fact, and never forgot the visit.*

---

* A newspaper correspondent who had been sent down from Chicago to "write up" Mr. Lincoln soon after his nomination, was kind enough several years ago to furnish me with an account of his visit. As some of his reminiscences are more or less interesting, I take the liberty of inserting a portion of his letter. "A what-not in the corner of the room," he relates, "was laden with various kinds of shells. Taking one in my hand, I said, 'This, I suppose, is called a Trocus by the geologist or naturalist.' Mr. Lincoln paused a moment as if reflecting and then replied, 'I do not know, for I never studied either geology or natural history.' I then took to examining the few pictures that hung on the walls, and was paying more than ordinary attention to one that hung above the sofa. He was immediately at my left and pointing to it said, 'That picture gives a very fair representation of my homely face.' . . . The time for my departure nearing, I made the usual apologies and started to go. 'You cannot get out of the town before a quarter past eleven,' remonstrated Mr. Lincoln, 'and you may as well stay a little longer.' Under pretence of some unfinished matters down town, however, I very reluctantly withdrew from the mansion. 'Well,' said Mr. Lincoln, as we passed into the hall, 'suppose you come over to the State House before you start for Chicago.' After a moment's deliberation I promised to do so. Mr. Lincoln, following without his hat, and continuing the conversation, shook hands across the gate, saying, 'Now, come over.' I wended my way to my hotel, and after a brief period was in his office at the State House. Resuming conversation, he said, 'If the man comes with the key before you go, I want to give you a book.' I

He had a way of pretending to assure his visitor that in the choice of his advisers he was "free to act as his judgment dictated," although David Davis, acting as his manager at the Chicago convention, had negotiated with the Indiana and Pennsylvania delegations, and assigned places in the cabinet to Simon Cameron and Caleb Smith, besides making other "arrangements" which Mr. Lincoln was expected to ratify. Of this he was undoubtedly aware, although in answer to a letter from Joshua R. Giddings, of Ohio, congratulating him

---

certainly hoped the man *would* come with the key. Some conversation had taken place at the house on which his book treated,—but I had forgotten this,—and soon Mr. Lincoln absented himself for perhaps two minutes and returned with a copy of the debates between himself and Judge Douglas. He placed the book on his knee, as he sat back on two legs of his chair, and wrote on the fly-leaf, 'J. S. Bliss, from A. Lincoln.' Besides this he marked a complete paragraph near the middle of the book. While sitting in the position described little Willie, his son, came in and begged his father for twenty-five cents. 'My son,' said the father, 'what do you want with twenty-five cents?' 'I want it to buy candy with,' cried the boy. 'I cannot give you twenty-five cents, my son, but will give you five cents,' at the same time putting his thumb and finger into his vest pocket and taking therefrom five cents in silver, which he placed upon the desk before the boy. But this did not reach Willie's expectations: he scorned the pile, and turning away clambered down-stairs and through the spacious halls of the Capitol, leaving behind him his five cents and a distinct reverberation of sound. Mr. Lincoln turned to me and said, 'He will be back after that in a few minutes.' 'Why do you think so?' said I. 'Because, as soon as he finds I will give him no more he will come and get it.' After the matter had been nearly forgotten and conversation had turned in an entirely different channel, Willie came cautiously in behind my chair and that of his father, picked up the specie, and went away without saying a word."—J. S. Bliss, letter, Jan. 29, 1867, MS.

on his nomination, he said,* "It is indeed most grateful to my feelings that the responsible position assigned me comes without conditions." Out of regard to the dignity of the exalted station he was about to occupy, he was not as free in discussing the matter of his probable appointments with some of his personal friends as they had believed he would be. In one or two instances, I remember, the latter were offended at his seeming disregard of the claims of old friendship. My advice was not asked for on such grave subjects, nor had I any right or reason to believe it would be; hence I never felt slighted or offended. On some occasions in our office, when Mr. Lincoln had come across from the State House for a rest or a chat with me, he would relate now and then some circumstance—generally an amusing one—connected with the settlement of the cabinet problem, but it was said in such a way that one would not have felt free to interrogate him about his plans. Soon after his election I received from my friend Joseph Medill, of Chicago, a letter which argued strongly against the appointment of Simon Cameron to a place in the cabinet, and which the writer desired I should bring to Mr. Lincoln's attention. I awaited a favorable opportunity, and one evening when we were alone in our office I gave it to him. It was an eloquent protest against the appointment of a corrupt and debased man, and coming from the source it did—the writer being one of Lincoln's best newspaper supporters—made a deep impression on him. Lincoln read

* Letter, May 21st, 1860, MS.

it over several times, but refrained from expressing any opinion. He did say however that he felt himself under no promise or obligation to appoint anyone; that if his friends made any agreements for him they did so over his expressed direction and without his knowledge. At another time he said that he wanted to give the South, by way of placation, a place in his cabinet; that a fair division of the country entitled the Southern States to a reasonable representation there, and if not interfered with he would make such a distribution as would satisfy all persons interested. He named three persons who would be acceptable to him. They were Botts, of Virginia; Stephens, of Georgia; and Maynard, of Tennessee. He apprehended no such grave danger to the Union as the mass of people supposed would result from the Southern threats, and said he could not in his heart believe that the South designed the overthrow of the Government. This is the extent of my conversation about the cabinet. Thurlow Weed, the veteran in journalism and politics, came out from New York and spent several days with Lincoln. He was not only the representative of Senator Seward, but rendered the President-elect signal service in the formation of his cabinet. In his autobiography Mr. Weed relates numerous incidents of this visit. He was one day opposing the claims of Montgomery Blair, who aspired to a cabinet appointment, when Mr. Lincoln inquired of Weed whom he would recommend. "Henry Winter Davis," was the response. "David Davis, I see, has been posting you up on this

question," retorted Lincoln. "He has Davis on the brain. I think Maryland must be a good State to move from." The President then told a story of a witness in court in a neighboring county, who on being asked his age replied, "Sixty." Being satisfied he was much older the question was repeated, and on receiving the same answer, the court admonished the witness, saying, "The court knows you to be much older than sixty." Oh, I understand now," was the rejoinder; "you're thinking of those ten years I spent on the eastern shore of Maryland; that was so much time lost and don't count."

Before Mr. Lincoln's departure from Springfield, people who knew him personally were frequently asked what sort of man he was. I received many letters, generally from the Eastern States, showing that much doubt still existed in the minds of the people whether he would prove equal to the great task that lay in store for him. Among others who wrote me on the subject was the Hon. Henry Wilson, late Vice-President of the United States, whom I had met during my visit to Washington in the spring of 1858. Two years after Mr. Lincoln's death, Mr. Wilson wrote me as follows: "I have just finished reading your letter dated December 21, 1860, in answer to a letter of mine asking you to give me your opinion of the President just elected. In this letter to me you say of Mr. Lincoln what more than four years of observation confirmed. After stating that you had been his law partner for over eighteen years and his most intimate and bosom friend all that time you say, 'I

know him better than he does himself. I know this seems a little strong, but I risk the assertion. Lincoln is a man of heart—aye, as gentle as a woman's and as tender—but he has a will strong as iron. He therefore loves all mankind, hates slavery and every form of despotism. Put these together —love for the slave, and a determination, a will, that justice, strong and unyielding, shall be done when he has the right to act, and you can form your own conclusion. Lincoln will fail here, namely, if a question of political economy—if any question comes up which is doubtful, questionable, which no man can demonstrate, then his friends can rule him; but when on justice, right, liberty, the Government, the Constitution, and the Union, then you may all stand aside: he will rule then, and no man can move him—no set of men can do it. There is no fail here. This is Lincoln, and you mark my prediction. You and I must keep the people right; God will keep Lincoln right.' These words of yours made a deep impression upon my mind, and I came to love and trust him even before I saw him. After an acquaintance of more than four years I found that your idea of him was in all respects correct—that he was the loving, tender, firm, and just man you represented him to be; while upon some questions in which moral elements did not so clearly enter he was perhaps too easily influenced by others. Mr. Lincoln was a genuine democrat in feelings, sentiments, and actions. How patiently and considerately he listened amid the terrible pressure of public affairs to the people who

thronged his ante-room! I remember calling upon him one day during the war on pressing business. The ante-room was crowded with men and women seeking admission. He seemed oppressed, careworn, and weary. I said to him, 'Mr. President, you are too exhausted to see this throng waiting to see you; you will wear yourself out and ought not see these people to-day.' He replied, with one of those smiles in which sadness seemed to mingle, 'They don't want much; they get but little, and I must see them.' During the war his heart was oppressed and his life burdened with the conflict between the tenderness of his nature and what seemed to be the imperative demands of duty. In the darkest hours of the conflict desertions from the army were frequent, and army officers urgently pressed the execution of the sentences of the law; but it was with the greatest effort that he would bring himself to consent to the execution of the judgment of the military tribunals. I remember calling early one Sabbath morning with a wounded Irish officer, who came to Washington to say that a soldier who had been sentenced to be shot in a day or two for desertion had fought gallantly by his side in battle. I told Mr. Lincoln we had come to ask him to pardon the poor soldier. After a few moments' reflection he said, 'My officers tell me the good of the service demands the enforcement of the law; but it makes my heart ache to have the poor fellows shot. I will pardon this soldier, and then you will all join in blaming me for it. You censure me for granting pardons, and yet you all ask me to do so.' I say

again, no man had a more loving and tender nature than Mr. Lincoln."

Before departing for Washington Mr. Lincoln went to Chicago* for a few days' stay, and there by previous arrangement met his old friend, Joshua F. Speed. Both were accompanied by their wives, and while the latter were out shopping the two husbands repaired to Speed's room at the hotel. "For an hour or more," relates Speed, "we lived over again the scenes of other days. Finally Lincoln threw himself on the bed, and fixing his eyes on a spot in the ceiling asked me this question, 'Speed, what is your pecuniary condition? are you rich or poor?' I answered, addressing him by his new title, 'Mr. President, I think I can anticipate what you are going to say. I'll speak candidly to you on the subject. My pecuniary condition is satisfactory to me now; You would perhaps call it good. I do not think you have within your gift any office I could afford to take.' Mr. Lincoln then proposed to make Guthrie, of Kentucky, Secretary of War, but did not want to write to him—asked me to feel of him. I did as requested, but the Kentucky statesman declined on the ground of his advanced age, and consequent physical inability to fill the position. He gave substantial assurance

---

* A lady called one day at the hotel where the Lincolns were stopping in Chicago to take Mrs. Lincoln out for a promenade or a drive. She was met in the parlor by Mr. Lincoln, who, after a hurried trip uptairs to ascertain the cause of the delay in his wife's appearance, returned with the report that "She will be down as soon as she has all her trotting harness on."

of his loyal sentiments, however, and insisted that the Union should be preserved at all hazards."

Late in January Mr. Lincoln informed me that he was ready to begin the preparation of his inaugural address. He had, aside from his law books and the few gilded volumes that ornamented the centre-table in his parlor at home, comparatively no library. He never seemed to care to own or collect books. On the other hand I had a very respectable collection, and was adding to it every day. To my library Lincoln very frequently had access. When, therefore, he began on his inaugural speech he told me what works he intended to consult. I looked for a long list, but when he went over it I was greatly surprised. He asked me to furnish him with Henry Clay's great speech delivered in 1850; Andrew Jackson's proclamation against Nullification; and a copy of the Constitution. He afterwards called for Webster's reply to Hayne, a speech which he read when he lived at New Salem, and which he always regarded as the grandest specimen of American oratory. With these few "volumes," and no further sources of reference, he locked himself up in a room upstairs over a store across the street from the State House, and there, cut off from all communication and intrusion, he prepared the address. Though composed amid the unromantic surroundings of a dingy, dusty, and neglected back room, the speech has become a memorable document. Posterity will assign to it a high rank among historical utterances; and it will ever bear comparison with the efforts of Washington, Jeffer-

son, Adams, or any that preceded its delivery from the steps of the national Capitol.

After Mr. Lincoln's rise to national prominence, and especially since his death, I have often been asked if I did not write this or that paper for him; if I did not prepare or help prepare some of his speeches. I know that other and abler friends of Lincoln have been asked the same question.* To people who made such enquiries I always responded, "You don't understand Mr. Lincoln. No man ever asked less aid then he; his confidence in his own ability to meet the requirements of every hour was so marked that his friends never thought of tendering their aid, and therefore no one could share his responsibilities. I never wrote a line for him; he never asked me to. I was never conscious of having exerted any influence over him. He often called out my views on some philosophical question, simply because I was a fond student of philosophy, and conceding that I had given the subject more attention than he; he often asked as to the use of a word or the turn of a sentence, but if I volunteered to recommend or even suggest a change of language which involved a change of sentiment I found him the most inflexible man I have ever seen."

One more duty—an act of filial devotion—remained to be done before Abraham Lincoln could

---

* "I know it was the general impression in Washington that I knew all about Lincoln's plans and ideas, but the truth is, I knew nothing. He never confided to me anything of his purposes." —David Davis, statement, September 20, 1866.

announce his readiness to depart for the city of Washington—a place from which it was unfortunately decreed he should never return. In the first week of February he slipped quietly away from Springfield and rode to Farmington in Coles County, where his aged step-mother was still living. Here, in the little country village, he met also the surviving members of the Hanks and Johnston families. He visited the grave of his father, old Thomas Lincoln, which had been unmarked and neglected for almost a decade, and left directions that a suitable stone should be placed there to mark the spot. Retracing his steps in the direction of Springfield he stopped over-night in the town of Charleston, where he made a brief address, recalling many of his boyhood exploits, in the public hall. In the audience were many persons who had known him first as the stalwart young ox-driver when his father's family drove into Illinois from southern Indiana. One man had brought with him a horse which the President-elect, in the earlier days of his law practice, had recovered for him in a replevin suit; another one was able to recite from personal recollection the thrilling details of the famous wrestling match between Lincoln the flat-boatman in 1830 and Daniel Needham; and all had some reminiscence of his early manhood to relate. The separation from his step-mother was particularly touching.*

* Lincoln's love for his second mother was a most filial and affectionate one. His letters show that he regarded the relation truly as that of mother and son. November 4, 1851, he writes her after the death of his father:

The parting, when the good old woman, with tears streaming down her cheeks, gave him a mother's benediction, expressing the fear that his life might be taken by his enemies, will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Deeply impressed by this farewell scene Mr. Lincoln reluctantly withdrew from the circle of warm friends who crowded around him, and, filled with gloomy forebodings of the future, returned to Springfield. The great questions of state having been pretty well settled in his own mind, and a few days yet remaining before his final departure, his neighbors and old friends called to take leave of him and pay their "best respects." Many of these callers were from New Salem, where he had made his start in life, and each one had some pleasant or amusing incident of earlier days to call up when they met. Hannah Armstrong, who had "foxed" his trowsers with buckskin in the days when he served as surveyor under John Calhoun, and whose son Lincoln had afterwards acquitted in the trial for murder at Beardstown, gave positive evidence of the interest she took in his continued rise in the world.

"DEAR MOTHER:

"Chapman tells me he wants you to go and live with him. If I were you I would try it awhile. If you get tired of it (as I think you will not) you can return to your own home. Chapman feels very kindly to you; and I have no doubt he will make your situation very pleasant.

"Sincerely your son,

"A. LINCOLN."

On the 9th of the same month he writes his step-brother John D. Johnston: "If the land can be sold so that I can get three hundred dollars to put to interest for mother I will not object if she does not. But before I will make a deed the money must be had, or secured beyond all doubt at ten per cent."

She bade him good-bye, but was filled with a presentiment that she would never see him alive again. "Hannah," he said, jovially, "if they do kill me I shall never die again." Isaac Cogsdale, another New Salem pioneer, came, and to him Lincoln again admitted his love for the unfortunate Anne Rutledge. Cogsdale afterwards told me of this interview. It occurred late in the afternoon. Mr. Nicolay, the secretary, had gone home, and the throng of visitors had ceased for the day. Lincoln asked about all the early families of New Salem, calling up the peculiarities of each as he went over the list. Of the Rutledges he said: "I have loved the name of Rutledge to this day. I have kept my mind on their movements ever since." Of Anne he spoke with some feeling: "I loved her dearly. She was a handsome girl, would have made a good, loving wife; she was natural, and quite intellectual, though not highly educated. I did honestly and truly love the girl, and think often of her now."

Early in February the last item of preparation for the journey to Washington had been made. Mr. Lincoln had disposed of his household goods and furniture to a neighbor, had rented his house; and as these constituted all the property he owned in Illinois there was no further occasion for concern on that score. In the afternoon of his last day in Springfield he came down to our office to examine some papers and confer with me about certain legal matters in which he still felt some interest. On several previous occasions he had told me he was coming over

to the office "to have a long talk with me," as he expressed it. We ran over the books and arranged for the completion of all unsettled and unfinished matters. In some cases he had certain requests to make—certain lines of procedure he wished me to observe. After these things were all disposed of he crossed to the opposite side of the room and threw himself down on the old office sofa, which, after many years of service, had been moved against the wall for support. He lay for some moments, his face towards the ceiling, without either of us speaking. Presently he inquired, "Billy,"—he always called me by that name,—"how long have we been together?" "Over sixteen years," I answered. "We've never had a cross word during all that time, have we?" to which I returned a vehement, "No, indeed we have not." He then recalled some incidents of his early practice and took great pleasure in delineating the ludicrous features of many a lawsuit on the circuit. It was at this last interview in Springfield that he told me of the efforts that had been made by other lawyers to supplant me in the partnership with him. He insisted that such men were weak creatures, who, to use his own language, "hoped to secure a law practice by hanging to his coat-tail." I never saw him in a more cheerful mood. He gathered a bundle of books and papers he wished to take with him and started to go; but before leaving he made the strange request that the sign-board which swung on its rusty hinges at the foot of the stairway should remain. "Let it hang

there undisturbed,"* he said, with a significant lowering of his voice. "Give our clients to understand that the election of a President makes no change in the firm of Lincoln and Herndon. If I live I'm coming back some time, and then we'll go right on practising law as if nothing had ever happened." He lingered for a moment as if to take a last look at the old quarters, and then passed through the door into the narrow hallway. I accompanied him downstairs. On the way he spoke of the unpleasant features surrounding the Presidential office. "I am sick of office-holding already," he complained, "and I shudder when I think of the tasks that are still ahead." He said the sorrow of parting from his old associations was deeper than most persons would imagine, but it was more marked in his case because of the feeling which had become irrepressible that he would never return alive. I argued against the thought, characterizing it as an illusory notion not in harmony or keeping with the

* In answer to the many inquiries made of me, I will say here that during this last interview Mr. Lincoln, for the first time, brought up the subject of an office under his administration. He asked me if I desired an appointment at his hands, and, if so, what I wanted. I answered that I had no desire for a Federal office, that I was then holding the office of Bank Commissioner of Illinois under appointment of Governor Bissel, and that if he would request my retention in office by Yates, the incoming Governor, I should be satisfied. He made the necessary recommendation, and Governor Yates complied. I was present at the meeting between Yates and Lincoln, and I remember that the former, when Lincoln urged my claims for retention in office, asked Lincoln to appoint their mutual friend A. Y. Ellis postmaster at Springfield. I do not remember whether Lincoln promised to do so or not, but Ellis was never appointed.

popular ideal of a President. "But it is in keeping with my philosophy," was his quick retort. Our conversation was frequently broken in upon by the interruptions of passers-by, who, each in succession, seemed desirous of claiming his attention. At length he broke away from them all. Grasping my hand warmly and with a fervent "Good-bye," he disappeared down the street, and never came back to the office again. On the morning following this last interview, the 11th day of February, the Presidential party repaired to the railway station, where the train which was to convey them to Washington awaited the ceremony of departure. The intention was to stop at many of the principal cities along the route, and plenty of time had been alloted for the purpose. Mr. Lincoln had told me that a man named Wood had been recommended to him by Mr. Seward, and he had been placed in charge of the party as a sort of general manager. The party, besides the President, his wife, and three sons, Robert, William, and Thomas, consisted of his brother-in-law, Dr. W. S. Wallace, David Davis, Norman B. Judd, Elmer E. Ellsworth, Ward H. Lamon, and the President's two secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay. Colonel E. V. Sumner and other army gentlemen were also in the car, and some friends of Mr. Lincoln—among them O. H. Browning, Governor Yates, and ex-Governor Moore—started with the party from Springfield, but dropped out at points along the way. The day was a stormy one, with dense clouds hanging heavily overhead. A goodly throng of Springfield people had gath-

ered to see the distinguished party safely off. After the latter had entered the car the people closed about it until the President appeared on the rear platform. He stood for a moment as if to suppress evidences of his emotion, and removing his hat made the following brief but dignified and touching address;* "Friends: No one who has never been placed in a like position can understand my feelings at this hour, nor the oppressive sadness I feel at this parting. For more than a quarter of a century I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here I have lived from my youth until now I am an old man. Here the most sacred ties of earth were assumed. Here all my children were born; and here one of them lies buried. To you, dear friends, I owe all that I have, all that I am. All the strange, checkered past seems to crowd now upon my mind. To-day I leave you. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which devolved upon Washington. Unless the great God who assisted him shall be with and aid me, I must fail; but if the same omniscient mind and almighty arm that directed and protected him shall guide and support me I shall not fail—I shall succeed. Let us all pray that

* I was not present when Mr. Lincoln delivered his farewell at the depot at Springfield, and never heard what he said. I have adopted the version of his speech as published in our papers. There has been some controversy over the exact language he used on that occasion, and Mr. Nicolay has recently published the speech from what he says is the original MS., partly in his own and partly in the handwriting of Mr. Lincoln. Substantially, however, it is like the speech as reproduced here from the Springfield paper.

the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke his wisdom and guidance for me. With these words I must leave you, for how long I know not. Friends, one and all, I must now bid you an affectionate farewell."

At the conclusion of this neat and appropriate farewell the train rolled slowly out, and Mr. Lincoln, still standing in the doorway of the rear car, took his last view of Springfield. The journey had been as well advertised as it had been carefully planned, and therefore, at every town along the route, and at every stop, great crowds were gathered to catch a glimpse of the President-elect.* Mr. Lincoln usu-

---

* "Before Mr. Lincoln's election in 1860 I, then a child of eleven years, was presented with his lithograph. Admiring him with my whole heart, I thought still his appearance would be much improved should he cultivate his whiskers. Childish thoughts must have utterance. So I proposed the idea to him, expressing as well as I was able the esteem in which he was held among honest men. A few days after I received this kind and friendly letter:

"'SPRINGFIELD, ILL., October 19, 1860.

"'MISS GRACE BEDELL.

"'*My Dear Little Miss*:—Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received. I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughter. I have three sons—one seventeen, one nine, and one seven. They with their mother constitute my whole family. As to the whiskers, as I have never worn any, do you not think that people would call it a piece of silly affectation were I to begin wearing them now?

"'I am your true friend and sincere well-wisher,

"'A. LINCOLN.'

"It appears I was not forgotten, for after his election to the Presidency, while on his journey to Washington, the train stopped at Westfield, Chautauqua County, at which place I then

ally gratified the wishes of the crowds, who called him out for a speech whether it was down on the regular programme of movements or not. In all cases his remarks were well-timed and sensibly uttered. At Indianapolis, where the Legislature was in session, he halted for a day and delivered a speech the burden of which was an answer to the Southern charges of coercion and invasion. From Indianapolis he moved on to Cincinnati and Columbus, at the last-named place meeting the Legislature of Ohio. The remainder of the journey convinced Mr. Lincoln of his strength in the affections of the people. Many, no doubt, were full of curiosity to see the now famous rail-splitter, but all were outspoken and earnest in their assurances of support. At Steubenville, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, New York, and Philadelphia he made manly and patriotic speeches. These speeches, plain in language and simple in illustration, made every man who heard them a stronger friend than ever of the Government. He was skilful enough to warn the people of the danger ahead and to impress them with his ability to deal properly with the situation, without in any case outlining his intended policy or revealing the

---

resided. Mr. Lincoln said, 'I have a correspondent in this place, a little girl whose name is Grace Bedell, and I would like to see her.' I was conveyed to him; he stepped from the cars, extending his hand and saying, 'You see I have let these whiskers grow for you, Grace,' kissed me, shook me cordially by the hand, and was gone. I was frequently afterward assured of his remembrance.'"—Grace G. Bedell, MS. letter, Dec. 14, 1866.

forces he held in reserve.* At Pittsburg he advised deliberation and begged the American people to keep their temper on both sides of the line. At Cleveland he insisted that "the crisis, as it is called, is an artificial crisis and has no foundation in fact;" and at Philadelphia he assured his listeners that under his administration there would be "no bloodshed unless it was forced upon the Government, and then it would be compelled to act in self-defence." This last utterance was made in front of Independence

---

* The following are extracts from Mr. Lincoln's letters written during the campaign in answer to his position with reference to the anticipated uprisings in the Southern States. They are here published for the first time:

[From a letter to L. Montgomery Bond, Esq., Oct. 15, 1860.]

"I certainly am in no temper and have no purpose to embitter the feelings of the South, but whether I am inclined to such a course as would in fact embitter their feelings you can better judge by my published speeches than by anything I would say in a short letter if I were inclined now, as I am not, to define my position anew."

[From a letter to Samuel Haycraft, dated, Springfield, Ill., June 4, 1860.]

"Like yourself I belonged to the old Whig party from its origin to its close. I never belonged to the American party organization, nor ever to a party called a Union party; though I hope I neither am or ever have been less devoted to the Union than yourself or any other patriotic man."

[Private and Confidential.]

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., Nov. 13, 1860.

"HON. SAMUEL HAYCRAFT.

"*My Dear Sir:*—Yours of the 9th is just received. I can only answer briefly. Rest fully assured that the good people of the South who will put themselves in the same temper and mood towards me which you do will find no cause to complain of me.

"Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

Hall, where, a few moments before, he had unfurled to the breeze a magnificent new flag, an impressive ceremony performed amid the cheers swelling from the vast sea of upturned faces before him. From Philadelphia his journey took him to Harrisburg, where he visited both branches of the Legislature then in session. For an account of the remainder of this now famous trip I beg to quote from the admirable narrative of Dr. Holland. Describing the welcome tendered him by the Legislature at Harrisburg, the latter says: "At the conclusion of the exercises of the day Mr. Lincoln, who was known to be very weary, was permitted to pass undisturbed to his apartments in the Jones House. It was popularly understood that he was to start for Washington the next morning, and the people of Harrisburg supposed they had only taken a temporary leave of him. He remained in his rooms until nearly six o'clock, when he passed into the street, entered a carriage unobserved in company with Colonel Lamon, and was driven to a special train on the Pennsylvania railroad in waiting for him. As a matter of precaution the telegraph wires were cut the moment he left Harrisburg, so that if his departure should be discovered intelligence of it could not be communicated at a distance. At half-past ten the train arrived at Philadelphia, and here Mr. Lincoln was met by a detective, who had a carriage in readiness in which the party were driven to the depot of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore railroad. At a quarter past eleven they arrived and very fortunately found the

regular train, which should have left at eleven, delayed. The party took berths in the sleeping-car, and without change of cars passed directly through Baltimore to Washington, where Mr. Lincoln arrived at half-past six o'clock in the morning and found Mr. Washburne anxiously awaiting him. He was taken into a carriage and in a few minutes he was talking over his adventures with Senator Seward at Willard's Hotel." The remaining members of the Presidential party from whom Mr. Lincoln separated at Harrisburg left that place on the special train intended for him; and as news of his safe arrival in Washington had been already telegraphed over the country no attempt was made to interrupt their safe passage through Baltimore. As is now generally well known many threats had up to that time been made that Mr. Lincoln, on his way to Washington, should never pass through Baltimore alive. It was reported and believed that conspiracies had been formed to attack the train, blow it up with explosives or in some equally effective way dispose of the President-elect. Mr. Seward and others were so deeply impressed with the grave features of the reports afloat that Allan Pinkerton, the noted detective of Chicago, was employed to investigate the matter and ferret out the conspiracy, if any existed. This shrewd operator went to Baltimore, opened an office as a stock-broker, and through his assistants —the most adroit and serviceable of whom was a woman—was soon in possession of inside information. The change of plans and trains at Harrisburg was due to his management and advice. Some

years before his death Mr. Pinkerton furnished me with a large volume of the written reports of his subordinates and an elaborate account by himself of the conspiracy and the means he employed to ferret it out. The narrative, thrilling enough in some particulars, is too extended for insertion here. It is enough for us to know that the tragedy was successfully averted and that Mr. Lincoln was safely landed in Washington.

In January preceding his departure from Springfield Mr. Lincoln, becoming somewhat annoyed, not to say alarmed, at the threats emanating from Baltimore and other portions of the country adjacent to Washington, that he should not reach the latter place alive, and that even if successful in reaching the Capitol his inauguration should in some way be prevented, determined to ascertain for himself what protection would be given him in case an effort should be made by an individual or a mob to do him violence. He sent a young military officer in the person of Thomas Mather, then Adjutant-General of Illinois, to Washington with a letter to General Scott, in which he recounted the threats he had heard and ventured to inquire as to the probability of any attempt at his life being made on the occasion of his inauguration. General Mather, on his arrival in Washington, found General Scott confined to his room by illness and unable to see visitors. On Mather calling a second time and sending in his letter he was invited up to the sick man's chamber. "Entering the room," related Mather in later years, "I found the old warrior, griz-

zly and wrinkled, propped up in the bed by an embankment of pillows behind his back. His hair and beard were considerably disordered, the flesh seemed to lay in rolls across his warty face and neck, and his breathing was not without great labor. In his hand he still held Lincoln's letter. He was weak from long-continued illness, and trembled very perceptibly. It was evident that the message from Lincoln had wrought up the old veteran's feelings. 'General Mather,' he said to me, in great agitation, 'present my compliments to Mr. Lincoln when you return to Springfield, and tell him I expect him to come on to Washington as soon as he is ready. Say to him that I'll look after those Maryland and Virginia rangers myself; I'll plant cannon at both ends of Pennsylvania avenue, and if any of them show their heads or raise a finger I'll blow them to hell.' On my return to Springfield," concludes Mather, "I hastened to assure Mr. Lincoln that, if Scott were alive on the day of the inauguration, there need be no alarm lest the performance be interrupted by any one. I felt certain the hero of Lundy's Lane would give the matter the care and attention it deserved."

Having at last reached his destination in safety, Mr. Lincoln spent the few days preceding his inauguration at Willard's Hotel, receiving an uninterrupted stream of visitors and friends. In the few unoccupied moments allotted him, he was carefully revising his inaugural address. On the morning of the 4th of March he rode from his hotel with Mr. Buchanan in an open barouche to the Capitol.

There, slightly pale and nervous, he was introduced to the assembled multitude by his old friend Edward D. Baker, and in a fervid and impressive manner delivered his address. At its conclusion the customary oath was administered by the venerable Chief Justice Taney, and he was now clothed with all the powers and privileges of Chief Magistrate of the nation. He accompanied Mr. Buchanan to the White House and here the historic bachelor of Lancaster bade him farewell, bespeaking for him a peaceful, prosperous, and successful administration.

One who witnessed the impressive scene left the following graphic description of the inauguration and its principle incidents: "Near noon I found myself a member of the motley crowd gathered about the side entrance to Willard's Hotel. Soon an open barouche drove up, and the only occupant stepped out. A large, heavy, awkward-moving man, far advanced in years, short and thin gray hair, full face, plentifully seamed and wrinkled, head curiously inclined to the left shoulder, a low-crowned, broad-brimmed silk hat, an immense white cravat like a poultice, thrusting the old-fashioned standing collar up to the ears, dressed in black throughout, with swallow-tail coat not of the newest style. It was President Buchanan, calling to take his successor to the Capitol. In a few minutes he reappeared, with Mr. Lincoln on his arm; the two took seats side-by-side, and the carriage rolled away, followed by a rather disorderly and certainly not very imposing procession. I had ample time to

walk to the Capitol, and no difficulty in securing a place where everything could be seen and heard to the best advantage. The attendance at the inauguration was, they told me, unusually small, many being kept away by anticipated disturbance, as it had been rumored—truly, too—that General Scott himself was fearful of an outbreak, and had made all possible military preparations to meet the emergency. A square platform had been built out from the steps to the eastern portico, with benches for distinguished spectators on three sides. Douglas, the only one I recognized, sat at the extreme end of the seat on the right of the narrow passage leading from the steps. There was no delay, and the gaunt form of the President-elect was soon visible, slowly making his way to the front. To me, at least, he was completely metamorphosed—partly by his own fault, and partly through the efforts of injudicious friends and ambitious tailors. He was raising (to gratify a very young lady, it is said) a crop of whiskers, of the blacking-brush variety, coarse, stiff, and ungraceful; and in so doing spoiled, or at least seriously impaired, a face which, though never handsome, had in its original state a peculiar power and pathos. On the present occasion the whiskers were reinforced by brand-new clothes from top to toe; black dress-coat, instead of the usual frock, black cloth or satin vest, black pantaloons, and a glossy hat evidently just out of the box. To cap the climax of novelty, he carried a

huge ebony cane, with a gold head the size of an egg. In these, to him, strange habiliments, he looked so miserably uncomfortable that I could not help pitying him. Reaching the platform, his discomfort was visibly increased by not knowing what to do with hat and cane; and so he stood there, the target for ten thousand eyes, holding cane in one hand and hat in the other, the very picture of helpless embarrassment. After some hesitation he pushed the cane into a corner of the railing, but could not find a place for the hat except on the floor, where I could see he did not like to risk it. Douglas, who fully took in the situation, came to rescue of his old friend and rival, and held the precious hat until the owner needed it again; a service which, if predicted two years before, would probably have astonished him. The oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Taney, whose black robes, attenuated figure, and cadaverous countenance reminded me of a galvanized corpse. Then the President came forward, and read his inaugural address in a clear and distinct voice. It was attentively listened to by all, but the closest listener was Douglas, who leaned forward as if to catch every word, nodding his head emphatically at those passages which most pleased him. There was some applause, not very much nor very enthusiastic. I must not forget to mention the presence of a Mephistopheles in the person of Senator Wigfall, of Texas, who stood with folded arms leaning against the doorway of the

Capitol, looking down upon the crowd and the ceremony with a contemptuous air, which sufficiently indicated his opinion of the whole performance. To him the Southern Confederacy was already an accomplished fact. He lived to see it the saddest of fictions."

CHAPTER XVII.

LINCOLN, the President, did not differ greatly from Lincoln the lawyer and politician. In the latter capacity only had his old friends in Illinois known him. For a long time after taking his seat they were curious to know what change, if any, his exalted station had made in him. He was no longer amid people who had seen him grow from the village lawyer to the highest rank in the land, and whose hands he could grasp in the confidence of a time-tried friendship; but now he was surrounded by wealth, power, fashion, influence, by adroit politicians and artful schemers of every sort. In the past his Illinois and particularly his Springfield friends* had shared the anxiety and responsi-

---

* Lincoln, even after his elevation to the Presidency, always had an eye out for his friends, as the following letters will abundantly prove:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, April 20, 1864.

"CALVIN TRUESDALE, ESQ.

"Postmaster, Rock Island, Ill.:

"Thomas J. Pickett, late agent of the Quartermaster's Department for the Island of Rock Island, has been removed or suspended from that position on a charge of having sold timber and stone from the island for his private benefit. Mr. Pickett is an old acquaintance and friend of mine, and I will thank you, if you will, to set a day or days and place on and at which to take testimony on the point. Notify Mr. Pickett and

bility of every step he made; but now they were no longer to continue in the partnership. Many of them wanted no office, but all of them felt great interest as well as pride in his future. A few attempted to keep up a correspondence with him, but his answers were tardy and irregular. Because he did not appoint a goodly portion of his early associates to comfortable offices, and did not interest himself in the welfare of everyone whom he had known in Illinois, or met while on the circuit, the erroneous impression grew that his eleva-

---

one J. B. Danforth (who as I understand makes the charge) to be present with their witnesses. Take the testimony in writing offered by both sides, and report it in full to me. Please do this for me.

"Yours truly,
"A. LINCOLN."

The man Pickett was formerly the editor of a newspaper in northern Illinois, and had, to use an expression of later days, inaugurated in the columns of his paper Lincoln's boom for the Presidency. When he afterwards fell under suspicion, no one came to his rescue sooner than the President himself.

The following letter needs no explanation:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, August 27, 1862.

"HON. WASH. TALCOTT.

"*My Dear Sir:*—I have determined to appoint you collector. I now have a very special request to make of you, which is, that you will make no war upon Mr. Washburne, who is also my friend, and of longer standing than yourself. I will even be obliged if you can do something for him if occasion presents.

"Yours truly,
"A. LINCOLN."

Mr. Talcott, to whom it was addressed, was furnished a letter of introduction by the President, as follows:

"The Secretary of the Treasury and the Commissioner of Internal Revenue will please see Mr. Talcott, one of the best men there is, and, if any difference, one they would like better than they do me.

"A. LINCOLN."

August 18, 1862.

tion had turned his head. There was no foundation for such an unwarranted conclusion. Lincoln had not changed a particle. He was overrun with duties and weighted down with cares; his surroundings were different and his friends were new, but he himself was the same calm, just, and devoted friend as of yore. His letters were few and brief, but they showed no lack of gratitude or appreciation, as the following one to me will testify:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, February 3, 1862.

"DEAR WILLIAM:—

"Yours of January 30th is just received. Do just as you say about the money matters. As you well know, I have not time enough to write a letter of respectable length. God bless you, says

"Your friend,

"A. LINCOLN."*

His letters to others were of the same warm and generous tenor, but yet the foolish notion prevailed that he had learned to disregard the condition and claims of his Springfield friends. One of the latter who visited Washington returned somewhat displeased because Mr. Lincoln failed to inquire after the health and welfare of each one of his old neighbors. The report spread that he cared nothing for his home or the friends who had made him what he was. Those who entertained this opinion of the man forgot that he was not exactly the property of

---

* On February 19, 1863, I received this despatch from Mr. Lincoln:

"Would you accept a job of about a month's duration, at St. Louis, $5 a day and mileage. Answer.

"A. LINCOLN."

Springfield and Illinois, but the President of all the States in the Union.*

In this connection it may not be out of order to refer briefly to the settlement by Mr. Lincoln of the claims his leading Illinois friends had on him. As before observed his own election to the Presidency cancelled Illinois as a factor in the cabinet problem, but in no wise disposed of the friends whom the public expected and whom he himself intended should be provided for. Of these latter the oldest and most zealous and effective was David Davis.† It is not extravagance, taking their long association together in mind, to say that Davis had done more for Lincoln than any dozen other friends he had. Of course, after Lincoln was securely installed in office, the people, especially in Illinois, awaited his recognition of Davis. What was finally done is minutely told in a letter by Leonard Swett, which it is proper here to insert:

---

* The following letter from a disappointed Illinois friend will serve to illustrate the perplexities that beset Lincoln in disposing of the claims of personal friendship. It was written by a man of no inconsiderable reputation in Illinois, where he at one time filled a State office: "Lincoln is a singular man, and I must confess I never knew him. He has for twenty years past used me as a plaything to accomplish his own ends; but the moment he was elevated to his proud position he seems all at once to have entirely changed his whole nature and become altogether a new being. He knows no one, and the road to his favor is always open to his enemies, while the door is hermetically sealed to his old friends."

† "I had done Lincoln many, many favors, had electioneered for him, spent my money for him, worked and toiled for him."—David Davis, statement, September 20, 1866.

"CHICAGO, ILL., August 29, 1887.

"WILLIAM H. HERNDON.

"*My Dear Sir:*—Your inquiry in reference to the circumstances of the appointment of David Davis as one of the Justices of the Supreme Court reached me last evening. In reply I beg leave to recall the fact, that in 1860 the politicians of Illinois were divided into three divisions, which were represented in the Decatur convention by the votes on the nomination for Governor. The largest vote was for Norman B. Judd, of Chicago, his strength in the main being the northern part of the State. I was next in order of strength, and Richard Yates the third, but the divisions were not materially unequal. The result was Yates was nominated, his strength being about Springfield and Jacksonville, extending to Quincy on the west, and mine was at Bloomington and vicinity and south and southeast.

"These divisions were kept up a while after Mr. Lincoln's election, and were considered in the distribution of Federal patronage. A vacancy in the United States Senate occurred early in 1861 by the death of Stephen A. Douglas, and Governor Yates appointed Oliver H. Browning, of Quincy, to fill the vacancy. There was also a vacancy upon the Supreme Bench of the United States to be filled from this general vicinity by Mr. Lincoln in the early part of his administration, and Judge Davis, of Bloomington, and Mr. Browning, of Quincy, were aspirants for the position. Mr. Browning had the advantage that Lincoln was new in his seat, and Senators were august personages; and, being in the Senate and a most courteous and able gentleman, Mr. Browning succeeded in securing nearly all the sensatorial strength, and Mr. Lincoln was nearly swept off his feet by the current of influence. Davis' supporters were the circuit lawyers mainly in the eastern and central part of the State. These lawyers

were at home, and their presence was not a living force felt constantly by the President at Washington.

"I was then living at Bloomington, and met Judge Davis every day. As months elapsed we used to get word from Washington in reference to the condition of things; finally, one day the word came that Lincoln had said, 'I do not know what I may do when the time comes, but there has never been a day when if I had to act I should not have appointed Browning.' Judge Davis, General Orme, and myself held a consultation in my law-office at Bloomington. We decided that the remark was too Lincolnian to be mistaken and no man but he could have put the situation so quaintly. We decided also that the appointment was gone, and sat there glum over the situation. I finally broke the silence, saying in substance, 'The appointment is gone and I am going to pack my carpet-sack for Washington.' 'No, you are not,' said Davis. 'Yes, I am,' was my reply. 'Lincoln is being swept off his feet by the influence of these Senators, and I will have the luxury of one more talk with him before he acts.'

"I did go home, and two days thereafter, in the morning about seven o'clock—for I knew Mr. Lincoln's habits well—was at the White House and spent most of the forenoon with him. I tried to impress upon him that he had been brought into prominence by the Circuit Court lawyers of the old eighth Circuit, headed by Judge Davis. 'If,' I said, 'Judge Davis, with his tact and force, had not lived, and all other things had been as they were, I believe you would not now be sitting where you are.' He replied gravely, 'Yes, that is so.' 'Now it is a common law of mankind,' said I, 'that one raised into prominence is expected to recognize the force that lifts him, or, if from a pinch, the force that lets him out. The Czar

Nicholas was once attacked by an assassin; a kindly hand warded off the blow and saved his life. The Czar hunted out the owner of that hand and strewed his pathway with flowers through life. The Emperor Napoleon III. had hunted out everybody who even tossed him a biscuit in his prison at Ham and has made him rich. Here is Judge Davis, whom you know to be in every respect qualified for this position, and you ought in justice to yourself and public expectation to give him this place.' We had an earnest pleasant forenoon, and I thought I had the best of the argument, and I think he thought so too.

"I left him and went to Willard's Hotel to think over the interview, and there a new thought struck me. I therefore wrote a letter to Mr. Lincoln and returned to the White House. Getting in, I read it to him and left it with him. It was, in substance, that he might think if he gave Davis this place the latter when he got to Washington would not give him any peace until he gave me a place equally as good; that I recognized the fact that he could not give this place to Davis, which would be charged to the Bloomington faction in our State politics, and then give me anything I would have and be just to the party there; that this appointment, if made, should kill 'two birds with one stone;' that I would accept it as one-half for me and one-half for the Judge; and that thereafter, if I or any of my friends ever troubled him, he could draw that letter as a plea in bar on that subject. As I read it Lincoln said, 'If you mean that among friends as it reads I will take it and make the appointment.' He at once did as he said.

"He then made a request of the Judge after his appointment in reference to a clerk in his circuit, and wrote him a notice of the appointment, which Davis received the same afternoon I returned to Bloomington.

"Judge Davis was about fifteen years my senior. I had come to his circuit at the age of twenty-four, and between him and Lincoln I had grown up leaning in hours of weakness on their own great arms for support. I was glad of the opportunity to put in the mite of my claims upon Lincoln and give it to Davis, and have been glad I did it every day since.

"An unknown number of people have almost every week since, speaking perhaps extravagantly, asked me in a quasi-confidential manner. 'How was it that you and Lincoln were so intimate and he never gave you anything?' I have generally said, 'It seems to me that is my question, and so long as I don't complain I do not see why you should.' I may be pardoned also for saying that I have not considered every man not holding an office out of place in life. I got my eyes open on this subject before I got an office, and as in Washington I saw the Congressman in decline I prayed that my latter end might not be like his.

Yours truly,

"LEONARD SWETT."

Before his departure for Washington, Mr. Lincoln had on several occasions referred in my presence to the gravity of the national questions that stared him in the face; yet from what he said I caught no definite idea of what his intentions were. He told me he would rely upon me to keep him informed of the situation about home, what his friends were saying of him, and whether his course was meeting with their approval. He suggested that I should write him frequently, and that arrangements would be made with his private secretary, Mr. Nicolay, that my letters should pass through

the latter's hands unopened. This plan was adhered to, and I have every reason now to believe that all my letters to Lincoln, although they contained no great secrets of state, passed unread into his hands. I was what the newspaper men would call a "frequent contributor." I wrote oftener than he answered, sometimes remitting him his share of old fees, sometimes dilating on national affairs, but generally confining myself to local politics and news in and around Springfield. I remember of writing him two copious letters, one on the necessity of keeping up the draft, the other admonishing him to hasten his Proclamation of Emancipation. In the latter I was especially fervid, assuring, him if he emancipated the slaves, he could "go down the other side of life filled with the consciousness of duty well done, and along a pathway blazing with eternal glory." How my rhetoric or sentiments struck him I never learned, for in the rush of executive business he never responded to either of the letters. Late in the summer of 1861, as elsewhere mentioned in these chapters, I made my first and only visit to Washington while he was President. My mission was intended to promote the prospects of a brother-in-law, Charles W. Chatterton, who desired to lay claim to an office in the Bureau of Indian affairs. Mr. Lincoln accompanied me to the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,—William P. Dole of Paris, Illinois,—told a good story, and made the request which secured the coveted office—an Indian agency—in an amazingly short time. This was one of the few favors I asked

of Mr. Lincoln, and he granted it "speedily—without delay; freely—without purchase; and fully—without denial." I remained in Washington for several days after this, and, notwithstanding the pressure of business, he made me spend a good portion of the time at the White House. One thing he could scarcely cease from referring to was the persistence of the office-seekers. They slipped in, he said, through the half-opened doors of the Executive Mansion; they dogged his steps if he walked; they edged their way through the crowds and thrust their papers in his hands when he rode;* and, taking it all in all, they well-nigh worried him to death. He said that, if the Government passed through the Rebellion without dismemberment, there was the strongest danger of its falling a prey to the rapacity of the office-seeking class. "This human struggle and scramble for office," were his words, "for a way to live without work, will finally test the strength of our institutions." A good part of the day during my stay I would spend with him in his office or waiting-room. I saw the endless line of callers, and met the scores of dignitaries one usually meets at the White House, even now; but nothing took place worthy of special mention here. One day Horace Maynard and Andrew Johnson, both senators from Tennessee, came in arm-in-arm. They declined to sit down, but at

* He said that one day, as he was passing down Pennsylvania avenue, a man came running after him, hailed him, and thrust a bundle of papers in his hands. It angered him not a little, and he pitched the papers back, saying, "I'm not going to open shop here."

once set to work to discuss with the President his recent action in some case in which they were interested. Maynard seemed very earnest in what he said. "Beware, Mr. President," he said, "and do not go too fast. There is danger ahead." "I know that," responded Lincoln, good-naturedly, "but I shall go just so fast and only so fast as I think I'm right and the people are ready for the step." Hardly half-a-dozen words followed, when the pair wheeled around and walked away. The day following I left Washington for home. I separated from Mr. Lincoln at the White House. He followed me to the rear portico, where I entered the carriage to ride to the railroad depot. He grasped me warmly by the hand and bade me a fervent "Good-bye." It was the last time I ever saw him alive.

Mrs. Ninian Edwards, who, it will be remembered, was the sister of Mrs. Lincoln, some time before her death furnished me an account of her visit to Washington, some of the incidents of which are so characteristic that I cannot refrain from giving them room here. This lady, without endeavoring to suppress mention of her sister's many caprices and eccentricities while mistress of the White House, remarked that, having been often solicited by the Lincolns to visit them, she and her husband, in answer to the cordial invitation, at last made the journey to Washington. "One day while there," she relates, "in order to calm his mind, to turn his attention away from business and cheer him up, I took Mr. Lincoln down through the conservatory belonging

to the Executive Mansion, and showed him the world of flowers represented there. He followed me patiently through. 'How beautiful these flowers are! how gorgeous these roses! Here are exotics,' I exclaimed, in admiration, 'gathered from the remotest corners of the earth, and grand beyond description.' A moody silence followed, broken finally by Mr. Lincoln with this observation: 'Yes, this whole thing looks like spring; but do you know I have never been in here before. I don't know why it is so, but I never cared for flowers; I seem to have no taste, natural or acquired, for such things.' I induced him one day," continued Mrs. Edwards, "to walk to the Park north of the White House. He hadn't been there, he said, for a year. On such occasions, when alone or in the company of a close friend, and released from the restraint of his official surroundings, he was wont to throw from his shoulders many a burden. He was a man I loved and respected. He was a good man, an honest and true one. Much of his seeming disregard, which has been tortured into ingratitude, was due to his peculiar construction. His habits, like himself, were odd and wholly irregular. He would move around in a vague, abstracted way, as if unconscious of his own or any one else's existence. He had no expressed fondness for anything, and ate mechanically. I have seen him sit down at the table absorbed in thought, and never, unless recalled to his senses, would he think of food. But, however peculiar and secretive he may have seemed, he was anything but cold. Beneath what the world saw

lurked a nature as tender and poetic as any I ever knew. The death of his son Willie, which occurred in Washington, made a deep impression on him. It was the first death in his family, save an infant who died a few days after its birth in Springfield. On the evening we strolled through the Park he spoke of it with deep feeling, and he frequently afterward referred to it. When I announced my intention of leaving Washington he was much affected at the news of my departure. We were strolling through the White House grounds, when he begged me with tears in his eyes to remain longer. 'You have such strong control and such an influence over Mary,' he contended, 'that when troubles come you can console me.' The picture of the man's despair never faded from my vision. Long after my return to Springfield, on reverting to the sad separation, my heart ached because I was unable in my feeble way to lighten his burden."

In the summer of 1866 I wrote to Mrs. Lincoln, then in Chicago, asking for a brief account of her own and her husband's life or mode of living while at the White House. She responded as follows:*

"375 West Washington Street,
CHICAGO, ILL., August 28, 1866.

"HON. WM. H. HERNDON.

"*My Dear Sir*:—Owing to Robert's absence from Chicago your last letter to him was only shown me last evening. The recollection of my

* From MSS. in Author's possession.

beloved husband's truly affectionate regard for you, and the knowledge of your great love and reverence for the best man that ever lived, would of itself cause you to be cherished with the sincerest regard by my sons and myself. In my overwhelming bereavement those who loved my idolized husband aside from disinterested motives are very precious to me and mine. My grief has been so uncontrollable that, in consequence, I have been obliged to bury myself in solitude, knowing that many whom I would see could not fully enter into the state of my feelings. I have been thinking for some time past I would like to see you and have a long conversation. I wish to know if you will be in Springfield next Wednesday week, September 4; if so, at ten o'clock in the morning you will find me at the St. Nicholas Hotel. Please mention this visit to Springfield to no one. It is a most sacred one, as you may suppose, to visit the tomb which contains my all in life—my husband. . . . If it will not be convenient, or if business at the time specified should require your absence, should you visit Chicago any day this week I will be pleased to see you. I remain,

"Very truly,

"MARY LINCOLN."

I met Mrs. Lincoln at the hotel in Springfield according to appointment. Our interview was somewhat extended in range, but none the less interesting. Her statement made at the time now lies before me. "My husband intended," she said, "when he was through with his Presidential term, to take me and our boys with him to Europe. After his return from Europe he intended to cross the Rocky Mountains and go to California, where the sol-

diers were to be digging out gold to pay the national debt. During his last days he and Senator Sumner became great friends, and were closely attached to each other. They were down the river after Richmond was taken—were full of joy and gladness at the thought of the war being over. Up to 1864 Mr. Lincoln wanted to live in Springfield, and if he died be buried there also; but after that and only a short time before his death he changed his mind slightly, but never really settled on any particular place. The last time I remember of his referring to the matter he said he thought it would be good for himself and me to spend a year or more travelling. As to his nature, he was the kindest man, most tender husband, and loving father in the world. He gave us all unbounded liberty, saying to me always when I asked for anything, 'You know what you want, go and get it,' and never asking if it were necessary. He was very indulgent to his children. He never neglected to praise them for any of their good acts. He often said, 'It is my pleasure that my children are free and happy, and unrestrained by parental tyranny. Love is the chain whereby to bind a child to its parents.'

"My husband placed great reliance on my knowledge of human nature, often telling me, when about to make some important appointment, that he had no knowledge of men and their motives. It was his intention to remove Seward as soon as peace with the South was declared. He greatly disliked Andrew Johnson. Once the latter, when we were in company, followed us around not a little. It

displeased Mr. Lincoln so much he turned abruptly and asked, loud enough to be heard by others, 'Why is this man forever following me?' At another time, when we were down at City Point, Johnson, still following us, was drunk. Mr. Lincoln in desperation exclaimed, 'For God's sake don't ask Johnson to dine with us.' Sumner, who was along, joined in the request. Mr. Lincoln was mild in his manners, but he was a terribly firm man when he set his foot down. None of us, no man or woman, could rule him after he had once fully made up his mind. I could always tell when in deciding anything he had reached the ultimatum. At first he was very cheerful, then he lapsed into thoughtfulness, bringing his lips together in a firm compression. When these symptoms developed I fashioned myself accordingly, and so did all others have to do sooner or later. When we first went to Washington many thought Mr. Lincoln was weak, but he rose grandly with the circumstances. I told him once of the assertion I had heard coming from the friends of Seward, that the latter was the power behind the throne; that he could rule him. He replied, 'I may not rule myself, but certainly Seward shall not. The only ruler I have is my conscience—following God in it—and these men will have to learn that yet.'

"Some of the newspaper attacks on him gave him great pain. I sometimes read them to him, but he would beg me to desist, saying, 'I have enough to bear now, but yet I care nothing for them. If I'm right I'll live, and if wrong I'll die anyhow; so let

them fight at me unrestrained.' My playful response would be, 'The way to learn is to hear both sides.' I once assured him Chase and certain others who were scheming to supplant him ought to be restrained in their evil designs. 'Do good to them who hate you,' was his generous answer, 'and turn their ill-will into friendship.'

"I often told Mr. Lincoln that God would not let any harm come of him. We had passed through four long years—terrible and bloody years—unscathed, and I believed we would be released from all danger. He gradually grew into that belief himself, and the old gloomy notion of his unavoidable taking-off was becoming dimmer as time passed away. Cheerfulness merged into joyfulness. The skies cleared, the end of the war rose dimly into view when the great blow came and shut him out forever."

For a glimpse of Lincoln's habits while a resident of Washington and an executive officer, there is no better authority than John Hay, who served as one of his secretaries. In 1866, Mr. Hay, then a member of the United States Legation in Paris, wrote me an interesting account, which so faithfully delineates Lincoln in his public home that I cannot refrain from quoting it entire. Although the letter was written in answer to a list of questions I asked, and was prepared without any attempt at arrangement, still it is none the less interesting. "Lincoln went to bed ordinarily," it begins, "from ten to eleven o'clock, unless he happened to be kept up by important news, in which case he would fre-

quently remain at the War Department till one or two. He rose early. When he lived in the country at the Soldiers' Home he would be up and dressed, eat his breakfast (which was extremely frugal, an egg, a piece of toast, coffee, etc.), and ride into Washington, all before eight o'clock. In the winter, at the White House, he was not quite so early. He did not sleep well, but spent a good while in bed. 'Tad' usually slept with him. He would lie around the office until he fell asleep, and Lincoln would shoulder him and take him off to bed. He pretended to begin business at ten o'clock in the morning, but in reality the ante-rooms and halls were full long before that hour—people anxious to get the first axe ground. He was extremely unmethodical; it was a four years' struggle on Nicolay's part and mine to get him to adopt some systematic rules. He would break through every regulation as fast as it was made. Anything that kept the people themselves away from him he disapproved, although they nearly annoyed the life out of him by unreasonable complaints and requests. He wrote very few letters, and did not read one in fifty that he received. At first we tried to bring them to his notice, but at last he gave the whole thing over to me, and signed, without reading them, the letters I wrote in his name. He wrote perhaps half-a-dozen a week himself—not more. Nicolay received members of Congress and other visitors who had business with the Executive office, communicated to the Senate and House the messages of the President, and exercised a general supervision over the

business. I opened and read the letters, answered them, looked over the newspapers, supervised the clerks who kept the records, and in Nicolay's absence did his work also. When the President had any rather delicate matter to manage at a distance from Washington he rarely wrote, but sent Nicolay or me. The House remained full of people nearly all day. At noon the President took a little lunch—a biscuit, a glass of milk in winter, some fruit or grapes in summer. He dined between five and six, and we went off to our dinner also. Before dinner was over, members and Senators would come back and take up the whole evening. Sometimes, though rarely, he shut himself up and would see no one. Sometimes he would run away to a lecture, or concert, or theatre for the sake of a little rest. He was very abstemious—ate less than any man I know. He drank nothing but water, not from principle but because he did not like wine or spirits. Once, in rather dark days early in the war, a temperance committee came to him and said that the reason we did not win was because our army drank so much whiskey as to bring the curse of the Lord upon them. He said it was rather unfair on the part of the aforesaid curse, as the other side drank more and worse whiskey than ours did. He read very little. He scarcely ever looked into a newspaper unless I called his attention to an article on some special subject. He frequently said, 'I know more about it than any of them.' It is absurd to call him a modest man. No great man was ever modest. It was his intellectual arrogance and unconscious assumption of superiority that

men like Chase and Sumner never could forgive. I believe that Lincoln is well understood by the people; but there is a patent-leather, kid-glove set who know no more of him than an owl does of a comet blazing into his blinking eyes.* Their estimates of him are in many cases disgraceful exhibitions of ignorance and prejudice. Their effeminate natures shrink instinctively from the contact of a great reality like Lincoln's character. I consider Lincoln's republicanism incarnate—with all its faults and all its virtues. As, in spite of some rudeness, republicanism is the sole hope of a sick world, so Lincoln, with all his foibles, is the greatest character since Christ."

In 1863 Mr. Lincoln was informed one morning that among the visitors in the ante-room of the White House was a man who claimed to be his relative. He walked out and was surprised to find

---

* Bancroft's eulogy on Lincoln never pleased the latter's life-long friends—those who knew him so thoroughly and well. February 16, 1866, David Davis, who had heard it, wrote me: "You will see Mr. Bancroft's oration before this reaches you. It is able, but Mr. Lincoln is in the background. His analysis of Mr. Lincoln's character is superficial. It did not please me. How did it satisfy you?" On the 22d he again wrote: "Mr. Bancroft totally misconceived Mr. Lincoln's character in applying 'unsteadiness' and confusion to it. Mr. Lincoln grew more steady and resolute, and his ideas were never confused. If there were any changes in him after he got here they were for the better. I thought him always master of his subject. He was a much more self-possessed man that I thought. He *thought* for himself, which is a rare quality nowadays. How could Bancroft know anything about Lincoln except as he judged of him as the public do? He never saw him, and is himself as cold as an icicle. I should never have selected an old Democratic politician, and that one from Massachusetts, to deliver an eulogy on Lincoln."

his boyhood friend and cousin, Dennis Hanks. The latter had come to see his distinguished relative on a rather strange mission. A number of persons living in Coles County, in Illinois, offended at the presence and conduct of a few soldiers who were at home from the war on furlough at the town of Charleston, had brought about a riot, in which encounter several of the latter had been killed. Several of the civilian participants who had acted as leaders in the strife had been arrested and sent to Fort McHenry or some other place of confinement equally as far from their homes. The leading lawyers and politicians of central Illinois were appealed to, but they and all others who had tried their hands had been signally unsuccessful in their efforts to secure the release of the prisoners. Meanwhile some one of a sentimental turn had conceived the idea of sending garrulous old Dennis Hanks to Washington, fondly believing that his relationship to the President might in this last extremity be of some avail. The novelty of the project secured its adoption by the prisioners' friends, and Dennis, arrayed in a suit of new clothes, set out for the national capital. I have heard him describe this visit very minutely. How his appearance in Washington and his mission struck Mr. Lincoln can only be imagined. The President, after listening to him and learning the purpose of his visit, retired to an adjoining room and returned with an extremely large roll of papers labelled, "The Charleston Riot Case," which he carefully untied and gravely directed his now diplomatic cousin to read. Subse-

quently, and as if to continue the joke, he sent him down to confer with the Secretary of War. He soon returned from the latter's office with the report that the head of the War Department could not be found; and it was well enough that he did not meet that abrupt and oftentimes demonstrative official. In the course of time, however, the latter happened in at the Executive Mansion, and there, in the presence of Dennis, the President sought to reopen the now noted Charleston case. Adopting Mr. Hanks' version, the Secretary, with his characteristic plainness of speech, referring to the prisoners, declared that "every d——d one of them should be hung." Even the humane and kindly enquiry of the President, "If these men should return home and become good citizens, who would be hurt?" failed to convince the distinguished Secretary that the public good could be promoted by so doing. The President not feeling willing to override the judgment of his War Secretary in this instance, further consideration of the case ceased, and his cousin returned to his home in Illinois with his mission unaccomplished.*

Dennis retained a rather unfavorable impression of Mr. Stanton, whom he described as a "frisky little Yankee with a short coat-tail." "I asked Abe," he said to me once, "why he didn't kick him out. I told him he was too fresh altogether."

---

* The subsequent history of these riot cases I believe is that the prisoners were returned to Illinois to be tried in the State courts there; and that by successive changes of venue and continuances the cases were finally worn out.

Lincoln's answer was, "If I did, Dennis, it would be difficult to find another man to fill his place." The President's cousin* sat in the office during the endless interviews that take place between the head of the nation and the latter's loyal subjects. He saw modesty and obscurity mingling with the arrogance of pride and distinction. One day an attractive and handsomely dressed woman called to procure the release from prison of a relative in whom she professed the deepest interest. She was a good talker, and her winning ways seemed to be making a deep impression on the President. After listening to her story he wrote a few lines on a card, enclosing it in an envelope and directing her to take it to the Secretary of War. Before sealing it he showed it to Dennis. It read: "This woman, dear Stanton, is a little smarter than she looks to be." She had, woman-like, evidently overstated her case. Before night another woman called, more humble in appearance, more plainly clad. It was the old story. Father and son both in the army, the former in prison. Could not the latter be discharged from the army and sent home to help his mother? A few strokes of the pen, a gentle nod of the head, and the little woman, her eyes filling with tears and expressing a grateful acknowledgment her tongue could not utter, passed out.

---

* During this visit Mr. Lincoln presented Dennis with a silver watch, which the latter still retains as a memento alike of the donor and his trip to Washington.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Before passing to a brief and condensed view of the great panorama of the war it will interest the reader and no doubt aid him greatly in drawing the portrait of Lincoln to call up for the purpose two friends of his, whose testimony is not only vivid and minute, but for certain reasons unusually appropriate and essential. The two were devoted and trusted friends of Lincoln; and while neither held office under him, both were offered and both declined the same. That of itself ought not to be considered as affecting or strengthening their statements, and yet we sometimes think that friends who are strong enough to aid us, and yet declining our aid, take care of themselves, are brave enough to tell us the truth. The two friends of Lincoln here referred to are Joshua F. Speed and Leonard Swett. In quoting them I adhere strictly to their written statements now in my possession. The former, under date of December 6, 1866, says: "Mr. Lincoln was so unlike all the men I had ever known before or seen or known since that there is no one to whom I can compare him. In all his habits of eating, sleeping, reading, conversation, and study he was, if I may so express it, regularly irregular; that is, he had no stated time for eating,

no fixed time for going to bed, none for getting up. No course of reading was chalked out. He read law, history, philosophy, or poetry; Burns, Byron, Milton, or Shakespeare and the newspapers, retaining them all about as well as an ordinary man would any one of them who made only one at a time his study. I once remarked to him that his mind was a wonder to me; that impressions were easily made upon it and never effaced. 'No,' said he, 'you are mistaken; I am slow to learn, and slow to forget that which I have learned. My mind is like a piece of steel—very hard to scratch anything on it, and almost impossible after you get it there to rub it out.' I give this as his own illustration of the character of his mental faculties; it is as good as any I have seen from anyone.

"The beauty of his character was its entire simplicity. He had no affectation in anything. True to nature, true to himself, he was true to everybody and everything around him. When he was ignorant on any subject, no matter how simple it might make him appear, he was always willing to acknowledge it. His whole aim in life was to be true to himself and being true to himself he could be false to no one.

"He had no vices, even as a young man. Intense thought with him was the rule and not, as with most of us, the exception. He often said that he could think better after breakfast, and better walking than sitting, lying, or standing. His world-wide reputation for telling anecdotes and telling them so well was in my judgment necessary to his very ex-

istence. Most men who have been great students, such as he was, in their hours of idleness have taken to the bottle, to cards or dice. He had no fondness for any of these. Hence he sought relaxation in anecdotes. So far as I now remember of his study for composition, it was to make short sentences and a compact style. Illustrative of this it might be well to state that he was a great admirer of the style of John C. Calhoun. I remember reading to him one of Mr. Calhoun's speeches in reply to Mr. Clay in the Senate, in which Mr. Clay had quoted precedent. Mr. Calhoun replied (I quote from memory) that 'to legislate upon precedent is but to make the error of yesterday the law of to-day.' Lincoln thought that was a great truth and grandly uttered.

"Unlike all other men, there was entire harmony between his public and private life. He must believe he was right, and that he had truth and justice with him, or he was a weak man; but no man could be stronger if he thought he was right.

"His familiar conversations were like his speeches and letters in this: that while no set speech of his (save the Gettysburg address) will be considered as entirely artistic and complete, yet, when the gems of American literature come to be selected, as many will be culled from Lincoln's speeches as from any American orator. So of his conversation, and so of his private correspondence; all abound in gems.

"My own connection or relation with Mr. Lincoln during the war has so often been commented on, and its extent so often enlarged upon, I feel impelled

to state that during his whole administration he never requested me to do anything, except in my own State, and never much in that except to advise him as to what measures and policy would be most conducive to the growth of a healthy Union sentiment.

"My own opinion of the history of the Emancipation Proclamation is that Mr. Lincoln foresaw the necessity for it long before he issued it. He was anxious to avoid it, and came to it only when he saw that the measure would subtract from its labor, and add to our army quite a number of good fighting men. I have heard of the charge of duplicity against him by certain Western members of Congress. I never believed the charge, because he has told me from his own lips that the charge was false. I, who knew him so well, could never after that credit the report. At first I was opposed to the Proclamation, and so told him. I remember well our conversation on the subject. He seemed to treat it as certain that I would recognize the wisdom of the act when I should see the harvest of good which we would ere long glean from it. In that conversation he alluded to an incident in his life, long passed, when he was so much depressed that he almost contemplated suicide. At the time of his deep depression he said to me that he had 'done nothing to make any human being remember that he had lived,' and that to connect his name with the events transpiring in his day and generation, and so impress himself upon them as to link his name with something that would redound to the

interest of his fellow man, was what he desired to live for. He reminded me of that conversation, and said with earnest emphasis, 'I believe that in this measure [meaning his Proclamation] my fondest hope will be realized.' Over twenty years had passed between the two conversations.

"The last interview but one I had with him was about ten days prior to his last inauguration. Congress was drawing to a close; it had been an important session; much attention had to be given to the important bills he was signing; a great war was upon him and the country; visitors were coming and going to the President with their varying complaints and grievances from morning till night with almost as much regularity as the ebb and flow of the tide; and he was worn down in health and spirits. On this occasion I was sent for, to come and see him. Instructions were given that when I came I should be admitted. When I entered his office it was quite full, and many more—among them not a few Senators and members of Congress —still waiting. As soon as I was fairly inside, the President remarked that he desired to see me as soon as he was through giving audiences, and that if I had nothing to do I could take the papers and amuse myself in that or any other way I saw fit till he was ready. In the room, when I entered, I observed sitting near the fireplace, dressed in humble attire, two ladies modestly waiting their turn. One after another of the visitors came and went, each bent on his own particular errand, some satisfied and others evidently displeased at the result of their

mission. The hour had arrived to close the door against all further callers. No one was left in the room now except the President, the two ladies, and me. With a rather peevish and fretful air he turned to them and said, 'Well, ladies, what can I do for you?' They both commenced to speak at once. From what they said he soon learned that one was the wife and the other the mother of two men imprisoned for resisting the draft in western Pennsylvania. 'Stop,' said he, 'don't say any more. Give me your petition.' The old lady responded, 'Mr. Lincoln, we've got no petition; we couldn't write one and had no money to pay for writing one, and I thought best to come and see you.' 'Oh,' said he, 'I understand your cases.' He rang his bell and ordered one of the messengers to tell General Dana to bring him the names of all the men in prison for resisting the draft in western Pennsylvania. The General soon came with the list. He enquired if there was any difference in the charges or degrees of guilt. The General replied that he knew of none. 'Well, then,' said he, 'these fellows have suffered long enough, and I have thought so for some time, and now that my mind is on the subject I believe I will turn out the whole flock. So, draw up the order, General, and I will sign it.' It was done and the General left the room. Turning to the women he said, 'Now, ladies, you can go.' The younger of the two ran forward and was in the act of kneeling in thankfulness. 'Get up.' he said; "don't kneel to me, but thank God and go.' The old lady now came forward with tears in her

eyes to express her gratitude. 'Good-bye, Mr. Lincoln,' said she; 'I shall probably never see you again till we meet in heaven.' These were her exact words. She had the President's hand in hers, and he was deeply moved. He instantly took her right hand in both of his and, following her to the door, said, 'I am afraid with all my troubles I shall never get to the resting-place you speak of; but if I do I am sure I shall find you. That you wish me to get there is, I believe, the best wish you could make for me. Good-bye.'

"We were now alone. I said to him, 'Lincoln, with my knowledge of your nervous sensibility, it is a wonder that such scenes as this don't kill you.' He thought for a moment and then answered in a languid voice, 'Yes, you are to a certain degree right. I ought not to undergo what I so often do. I am very unwell now; my feet and hands of late seem to be always cold, and I ought perhaps to be in bed; but things of the sort you have just seen don't hurt me, for, to tell you the truth, that scene is the only thing to-day that has made me forget my condition or given me any pleasure. I have, in that order, made two people happy and alleviated the distress of many a poor soul whom I never expect to see. That old lady,' he continued, 'was no counterfeit. The mother spoke out in all the features of her face. It is more than one can often say that in doing right one has made two people happy in one day. Speed, die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I

thought a flower would grow.' What a fitting sentiment! What a glorious recollection!"

The recollections of Lincoln by Mr. Swett are in the form of a letter dated January 17, 1866. There is so much of what I know to be true in it, and it is so graphically told, that although there may be some repetition of what has already been touched upon in the preceding chapters, still I believe that the portrait of Lincoln will be made all the more life-like by inserting the letter without abridgment.

"CHICAGO, ILL., Jan. 17, 1866.

"WM. H. HERNDON, ESQ.

"Springfield, Ill.

"*Dear Sir:* I received your letter today, asking me to write you Friday. Fearing if I delay, you will not get it in time, I will give you such hasty thoughts as may occur to me to-night. I have mislaid your second lecture, so that I have not read it at all, and have not read your first one since about the time it was published. What I shall say, therefore, will be based upon my own ideas rather than a review of the lecture.

"Lincoln's whole life was a calculation of the law of forces and ultimate results. The whole world to him was a question of cause and effect. He believed the results to which certain causes tended; he did not believe that those results could be materially hastened or impeded. His whole political history, especially since the agitation of the slavery question, has been based upon this theory. He believed from the first, I think, that the agitation of slavery would produce its overthrow, and he acted upon the result as though it was present from the beginning. His tactics were to get himself in

the right place and remain there still, until events would find him in that place. This course of action led him to say and do things which could not be understood when considered in reference to the immediate surroundings in which they were done or said. You will remember, in his campaign against Douglas in 1858, the first ten lines of the first speech he made defeated him. The sentiment of the 'house divided against itself' seemed wholly inappropriate. It was a speech made at the commencement of a campaign, and apparently made for the campaign. Viewing it in this light alone, nothing could have been more unfortunate or inappropriate. It was saying just the wrong thing; yet he saw it was an abstract truth, and standing by the speech would ultimately find him in the right place. I was inclined at the time to believe these words were hastily and inconsiderately uttered, but subsequent facts have convinced me they were deliberate and had been matured. Judge T. L. Dickey says, that at Bloomington, at the first Republican Convention in 1856, he uttered the same sentences in a speech delivered there, and that after the meeting was over, he (Dickey) called his attention to these remarks.

"Lincoln justified himself in making then by stating they were true; but finally, at Dickey's urgent request, he promised that for his sake, or upon his advice, he would not repeat them. In the summer of 1859, when he was dining with a party of his intimate friends at Bloomington, the subject of his Springfield speech was discussed. We all insisted it was a great mistake, but he justified himself, and finally said, 'Well, gentlemen, you may think that speech was a mistake, but I never have believed it was, and you will see the day when you will consider it was the wisest thing I ever said.'

"He never believed in political combinations,

and consequently, whether an individual man or class of men supported or opposed him, never made any difference in his feelings, or his opinions of his own success. If he was elected, he seemed to believe that no person or class of persons could ever have defeated him, and if defeated, he believed nothing could ever have elected him. Hence, when he was a candidate, he never wanted anything done for him in the line of political combination or management. He seemed to want to let the whole subject alone, and for everybody else to do the same. I remember, after the Chicago Convention, when a great portion of the East were known to be dissatisfied at his nomination, when fierce conflicts were going on in New York and Pennsylvania, and when great exertions seemed requisite to harmonize and mould in concert the action of our friends, Lincoln always seemed to oppose all efforts made in the direction of uniting the party. I arranged with Mr. Thurlow Weed after the Chicago Convention to meet him at Springfield. I was present at the interview, but Lincoln said nothing. It was proposed that Judge Davis should go to New York and Pennsylvania to survey the field and see what was necessary to be done. Lincoln consented, but it was always my opinion that he consented reluctantly.

"He saw that the pressure of a campaign was the external force coercing the party into unity. If it failed to produce that result, he believed any individual effort would also fail. If the desired result followed, he considered it attributable to the great cause, and not aided by the lesser ones. He sat down in his chair in Springfield and made himself the Mecca to which all politicians made pilgrimages. He told them all a story, said nothing, and sent them away. All his efforts to procure a second nomination were in the same direction. I

believe he earnestly desired that nomination. He was much more eager for it than he was for the first, and yet from the beginning he discouraged all efforts on the part of his friends to obtain it. From the middle of his first term all his adversaries were busily at work for themselves. Chase had three or four secret societies and an immense patronage extending all over the country. Frémont was constantly at work, yet Lincoln would never do anything either to hinder them or to help himself.

"He was considered too conservative, and his adversaries were trying to outstrip him in satisfying the radical element. I had a conversation with him upon this subject in October, 1863, and tried to induce him to recommend in his annual message a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. I told him I was not very radical, but I believed the result of the war would be the extermination of slavery; that Congress would pass the amendment making the slave free, and that it was proper at that time to be done. I told him also, if he took that stand, it was an outside position, and no one could maintain himself upon any measure more radical, and if he failed to take the position, his rivals would. Turning to me suddenly he said, 'Is not the question of emancipation doing well enough now?' I replied it was. 'Well', said he, 'I have never done an official act with a view to promote my own personal aggrandizement, and I don't like to begin now. I can see that emancipation is coming; whoever can wait for it will see it; whoever stands in its way will be run over by it.'

"His rivals were using money profusely; journals and influences were being subsidized against him. I accidentally learned that a Washington newspaper, through a purchase of the establishment, was to be turned against him, and consulted him about taking steps to prevent it. The only thing I

could get him to say was that he would regret to see the paper turned against him. Whatever was done had to be done without his knowledge. Mr. Bennett of the *Herald,* with his paper, you know, is a power. The old gentleman wanted to be noticed by Lincoln, and he wanted to support him. A friend of his, who was certainly in his secrets, came to Washington and intimated if Lincoln would invite Bennett to come over and chat with him, his paper would be all right. Mr. Bennett wanted nothing, he simply wanted to be noticed. Lincoln in talking about it said, 'I understand it; Bennett has made a great deal of money, some say not very properly, now he wants me to make him respectable. I have never invited Mr. Bryant or Mr. Greeley here; I shall not, therefore, especially invite Mr. Bennett.' All Lincoln would say was, that he was receiving everybody, and he should receive Mr. Bennett if he came.

"Notwithstanding his entire inaction, he never for a moment doubted his second nomination. One time in his room discussing with him who his real friends were, he told me, if I would not show it, he would make a list of how the Senate stood. When he got through, I pointed out some five or six, and I told him I knew he was mistaken about them. Said he, 'You may think so, but you keep that until the convention and tell me then whether I was right.' He was right to a man. He kept a kind of account book of how things were progressing, for three or four months, and whenever I would get nervous and think things were going wrong, he would get out his estimates and show how everything on the great scale of action, such as the resolutions of legislatures, the instructions of delegates, and things of that character, were going exactly as he expected. These facts, with many others of a kindred nature, have convinced me that he managed

his politics upon a plan entirely different from any other man the country has ever produced.

"He managed his campaigns by ignoring men and by ignoring all small causes, but by closely calculating the tendencies of events and the great forces which were producing logical results.

"In his conduct of the war he acted upon the theory that but one thing was necessary, and that was a united North. He had all shades of sentiments and opinions to deal with, and the consideration was always presented to his mind, how can I hold these discordant elements together?

"It was here that he located his own greatness as a President. One time, about the middle of the war, I left his house about eleven o'clock at night, at the Soldiers' Home. We had been discussing the discords in the country, and particularly the States of Missouri and Kentucky. As we separated at the door he said, 'I may not have made as great a President as some other men, but I believe I have kept these discordant elements together as well as anyone could.' Hence, in dealing with men he was a trimmer, and such a trimmer the world has never seen. Halifax, who was great in his day as a trimmer, would blush by the side of Lincoln; yet Lincoln never trimmed in principles, it was only in his conduct with men. He used the patronage of his office to feed the hunger of these various factions. Weed always declared that he kept a regular account-book of his appointments in New York, dividing his various favors so as to give each faction more than it could get from any other source, yet never enough to satisfy its appetite.

"They all had access to him, they all received favors from him, and they all complained of ill treatment; but while unsatisfied, they all had 'large expectations,' and saw in him the chance of obtaining more than from anyone else whom they could

be sure of getting in his place. He used every force to the best possible advantage. He never wasted anything, and would always give more to his enemies than he would to his friends; and the reason was, because he never had anything to spare, and in the close calculation of attaching the factions to him, he counted upon the abstract affection of his friends as an element to be offset against some gift with which he must appease his enemies. Hence, there was always some truth in the charge of his friends that he failed to reciprocate their devotion with his favors. The reason was, that he had only just so much to give away—'He always had more horses than oats.'

"An adhesion of all forces was indispensable to his success and the success of the country; hence he husbanded his means with the greatest nicety of calculation. Adhesion was what he wanted; if he got it gratuitously he never wasted his substance paying for it.

"His love of the ludicrous was not the least peculiar of his characteristics. His love of fun made him overlook everything else but the point of the joke sought after. If he told a good story that was refined and had a sharp point, he did not like it any the better because it was refined. If it was outrageously vulgar, he never seemed to see that part of it, if it had the sharp ring of wit; nothing ever reached him but the wit. Almost any man that will tell a very vulgar story, has, in a degree, a vulgar mind; but it was not so with him; with all his purity of character and exalted morality and sensibility, which no man can doubt, when hunting for wit he had no ability to discriminate between the vulgar and the refined substances from which he extracted it. It was the wit he was after, the pure jewel, and he would pick it up out of the mud or dirt just as readily as he would from a parlor table.

"He had great kindness of heart. His mind was full of tender sensibilities, and he was extremely humane, yet while these attributes were fully developed in his character, and, unless intercepted by his judgment, controlled him, they never did control him contrary to his judgment. He would strain a point to be kind, but he never strained it to breaking. Most men of much kindly feeling are controlled by this sentiment against their judgment, or rather that sentiment beclouds their judgment. It was never so with him; he would be just as kind and generous as his judgment would let him be—no more. If he ever deviated from this rule, it was to save life. He would sometimes, I think, do things he knew to be impolitic and wrong to save some poor fellow's neck. I remember one day being in his room when he was sitting at his table with a large pile of papers before him, and after a pleasant talk he turned quite abruptly and said, 'Get out of the way, Swett; to-morrow is butcher-day, and I must go through these papers and see if I cannot find some excuse to let these poor fellows off.' The pile of papers he had were the records of courts martial of men who on the following day were to be shot. He was not examining the records to see whether the evidence sustained the findings; he was purposely in search of occasions to evade the law, in favor of life.

"Some of Lincoln's friends have insisted that he lacked the strong attributes of personal affection which he ought to have exhibited; but I think this is a mistake. Lincoln had too much justice to run a great government for a few favors; and the complaints against him in this regard, when properly digested, seem to amount to this and no more, that he would not abuse the privileges of his situation.

"He was certainly a very poor hater. He never

judged men by his like or dislike for them. If any given act was to be performed, he could understand that his enemy could do it just as well as anyone. If a man had maligned him or been guilty of personal ill-treatment, and was the fittest man for the place, he would give him that place just as soon as he would give it to a friend.

"I do not think he ever removed a man because he was his enemy or because he disliked him.

"The great secret of his power as an orator, in my judgment, lay in the clearness and perspicuity of his statements. When Mr. Lincoln had stated a case it was always more than half argued and the point more than half won. It is said that some one of the crowned heads of Europe proposed to marry when he had a wife living. A gentleman, hearing of this proposition, replied, how could he? 'Oh,' replied his friend, 'he could marry and then he could get Mr. Gladstone to make an explanation about it.' This was said to illustrate the convincing power of Mr. Gladstone's statement.

"Mr. Lincoln had this power greater than any man I have ever known. The first impression he generally conveyed was, that he had stated the case of his adversary better and more forcibly than his opponent could state it himself. He then answered that statement of facts fairly and fully, never passing by or skipping over a bad point.

"When this was done he presented his own case. There was a feeling, when he argued a case, in the mind of any man who listened to it, that nothing had been passed over; yet if he could not answer the objections he argued, in his own mind, and himself arrive at the conclusion to which he was leading others, he had very little power of argumentation. The force of his logic was in conveying to the minds of others the same clear and thorough analysis he had in his own, and if his own mind

failed to be satisfied, he had little power to satisfy anybody else. He never made a sophistical argument in his life, and never could make one. I think he was of less real aid in trying a thoroughly bad case than any man I was ever associated with. If he could not grasp the whole case and believe in it, he was never inclined to touch it.

"From the commencement of his life to its close, I have sometimes doubted whether he ever asked anybody's advice about anything. He would listen to everybody; he would hear everybody; but he rarely, if ever, asked for opinions. I never knew him in trying a case to ask the advice of any lawyer he was associated with.

"As a politician and as President, he arrived at all his conclusions from his own reflections, and when his opinion was once formed, he never doubted but what it was right.

"One great public mistake of his character, as generally received and acquiesced in, is that he is considered by the people of this country as a frank, guileless, and unsophisticated man. There never was a greater mistake. Beneath a smooth surface of candor and apparent declaration of all his thoughts and feelings, he exercised the most exalted tact and the wisest discrimination. He handled and moved men remotely as we do pieces upon a chess-board. He retained through life all the friends he ever had, and he made the wrath of his enemies to praise him. This was not by cunning or intrigue, in the low acceptation of the term, but by far-seeing reason and discernment. He always told enough only of his plans and purposes to induce the belief that he had communicated all, yet he reserved enough to have communicated nothing. He told all that was unimportant with a gushing frankness, yet no man ever kept his real

purposes closer, or penetrated the future further with his deep designs.

"You ask me whether he changed his religious opinions towards the close of his life. I think not. As he became involved in matters of the greatest importance, full of great responsibility and great doubt, a feeling of religious reverence, a belief in God and his justice and overruling power increased with him. He was always full of natural religion; he believed in God as much as the most approved Church member, yet he judged of Him by the same system of generalization as he judged everything else. He had very little faith in ceremonials or forms. In fact he cared nothing for the form of anything. But his heart was full of natural and cultivated religion. He believed in the great laws of truth, and the rigid discharge of duty, his accountability to God, the ultimate triumph of the right and the overthrow of wrong. If his religion were to be judged by the lines and rules of Church creeds he would fall far short of the standard; but if by the higher rule of purity of conduct, of honesty of motive, of unyielding fidelity to the right, and acknowledging God as the supreme ruler, then he filled all the requirements of true devotion, and his whole life was a life of love to God, and love of his neighbor as of himself.

"Yours truly,

"LEONARD SWETT."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE outlines of Mr. Lincoln's Presidential career are alone sufficient to fill a volume, and his history after he had been sworn into office by Chief Justice Taney is so much a history of the entire country, and has been so admirably and thoroughly told by others, that I apprehend I can omit many of the details and still not impair the portrait I have been endeavoring to draw in the mind of the reader. The rapid shifting of scenes in the drama of secession, the disclosure of rebellious plots and conspiracies, the threats of Southern orators and newspapers, all culminating in the attack on Fort Sumter, brought the newly installed President face to face with the stern and grave realities of a civil war.* Mr. Lincoln's military knowledge had been acquired in the famous campaign against the Indian Chief Black Hawk on the frontier in 1832, the thrilling details

* "Lincoln then told me of his last interview with Douglas. 'One day Douglas came rushing in,' he related, 'and said he had just got a telegraph despatch from some friends in Illinois urging him to come out and help set things right in Egypt, and that he would go, or stay in Washington, just where I thought he could do the most good. I told him to do as he chose, but that he could probably do best in Illinois. Upon that he shook hands with me and hurried away to catch the next train. I never saw him again.'"—Henry C. Whitney, MS. letter, November 13, 1866.

of which he had already given the country in a Congressional stump-speech; and to this store of experience he had made little if any addition. It was therefore generally conceded that in grappling with the realities of the problem which now confronted both himself and the country he would be wholly dependent on those who had made the profession of arms a life-work. Those who held such hastily conceived notions of Mr. Lincoln were evidently misled by his well-known and freely advertised Democratic manners. Anybody had a right, it was supposed, to advise him of his duty; and he was so conscious of his shortcomings as a military President that the army officers and Cabinet would run the Government and conduct the war. That was the popular idea. Little did the press, or people, or politicians then know that the country lawyer who occupied the executive chair was the most self-reliant man who ever sat in it, and that when the crisis came his rivals in the Cabinet, and the people everywhere, would learn that he and he alone would be master of the situation.

It is doubtless true that for a long time after his entry into office he did not assert himself; that is, not realizing the gigantic scale upon which the war was destined to be fought, he may have permitted the idea to go forth that being unused to the command of armies he would place himself entirely in the hands of those who were.* The Secretary of

* "I was in Washington in the Indian service for a few days before August, 1861, and I merely said to Lincoln one day, "Everything is drifting into the war, and I guess you will have

State, whose ten years in the Senate had acquainted him with our relations to foreign powers, may have been lulled into the innocent belief that the Executive would have no fixed or definite views on international questions. So also of the other Cabinet officers; but alas for their fancied security! It was the old story of the sleeping lion. Old politicians, eying him with some distrust and want of confidence, prepared themselves to control his administration, not only as a matter of right, but believing that he would be compelled to rely upon them for support. A brief experience taught them he was not the man they bargained for.

Next in importance to the attack on Fort Sumter, from a military standpoint, was the battle of Bull Run. How the President viewed it is best illustrated by an incident furnished by an old friend* who was an associate of his in the Legislature of Illinois, and who was in Washington when the engagement took place. "The night after the battle," he relates, "accompanied by two Wisconsin Congressmen, I called at the White House to get the news from Manassas, as it was then called, having failed in obtaining any information at Seward's office and elsewhere. Stragglers were coming with all sorts of wild rumors, but nothing more definite than that there had been a great engagement; and

---

to put me in the army.' He looked up from his work and said, good-humoredly, 'I'm making generals now. In a few days I will be making quartermasters, and then I'll fix you.'"—H. C. Whitney, MS. letter, June 13, 1866.

* Robert L. Wilson, MS., Feb. 10, 1866.

the bearer of each report had barely escaped with his life. Messengers bearing despatches to the President and Secretary of War were constantly arriving, but outsiders could gather nothing worthy of belief. Having learned that Mr. Lincoln was at the War Department we started thither, but found the building surrounded by a great crowd, all as much in the dark as we. Removing a short distance away we sat down to rest. Presently Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Nicolay, his private secretary, came along, headed for the White House. It was proposed by my companions that as I was acquainted with the President I should join him and ask for the news. I did so, but he said that he had already told more than under the rules of the War Department he had any right to, and that, although he could see no harm in it, the Secretary of War had forbidden his imparting information to persons not in the military service. 'These war fellows,' he said, complainingly, 'are very strict with me, and I regret that I am prevented from telling you anything; but I must obey them, I suppose, until I get the hang of things.' 'But, Mr. President,' I insisted, 'if you cannot tell me the news, you can at least indicate its nature, that is, whether good or bad.' The suggestion struck him favorably. Grasping my arm he leaned over, and placing his face near my ear, said, in a shrill but subdued voice, 'It's d——d bad.' It was the first time I had ever heard him use profane language, if indeed it was profane in that connection; but later, when the painful details of the fight came in, I realized that, taking into consideration the time

and the circumstances, no other term would have contained a truer qualification of the world 'bad.'"

"About one week after the battle of Bull Run," relates another old friend—Whitney—from Illinois, "I made a call on Mr. Lincoln, having no business except to give him some presents which the nuns at the Osage Mission school in Kansas had sent to him through me. A Cabinet meeting had just adjourned, and I was directed to go at once to his room. He was keeping at bay a throng of callers, but, noticing me enter, arose and greeted me with his old-time cordiality. After the room had been partially cleared of visitors Secretary Seward came in and called up a case which related to the territory of New Mexico. 'Oh, I see,' said Lincoln; 'they have neither Governor nor Government. Well, you see Jim Lane; the secretary is his man, and he must hunt him up.' Seward then left, under the impression, as I then thought, that Lincoln wanted to get rid of him and diplomacy at the same time. Several other persons were announced, but Lincoln notified them all that he was busy and could not see them. He was playful and sportive as a child, told me all sorts of anecdotes, dealing largely in stories about Charles James Fox, and enquired after several odd characters whom we both knew in Illinois. While thus engaged General James was announced. This officer had sent in word that he would leave town that evening, and must confer with the President before going. 'Well, as he is one of the fellows who make cannons,' observed Lincoln, 'I suppose I must see him. Tell him

when I get through with Whitney I'll see him.' No more cards came up, and James left about five o'clock, declaring that the President was closeted with 'an old Hoosier from Illinois, and was telling dirty yarns while the country was quietly going to hell.' But, however indignant General James may have felt, and whatever the people may have thought, still the President was full of the war. He got down his maps of the seat of war," continues Whitney, "and gave me a full history of the preliminary discussions and steps leading to the battle of Bull Run. He was opposed to the battle, and explained to General Scott by those very maps how the enemy could by the aid of the railroad reinforce their army at Manassas Gap until they had brought every man there, keeping us meanwhile successfully at bay. 'I showed to General Scott our paucity of railroad advantages at that point,' said Lincoln, 'and their plenitude, but Scott was obdurate and would not listen to the possibility of defeat. Now you see I was right, and Scott knows it, I reckon. My plan was, and still is, to make a strong feint against Richmond and distract their forces before attacking Manassas. That problem General McClellan is now trying to work out.' Mr. Lincoln then told me of the plan he had recommended to McClellan, which was to send gunboats up one of the rivers—not the James—in the direction of Richmond, and divert the enemy there while the main attack was made at Manassas. I took occasion to say that McClellan was ambitious to be his successor. 'I am perfectly willing,' he

answered, 'if he will only put an end to this war.' "*

The interview of Mr. Whitney with the President on this occasion is especially noteworthy because the latter unfolded to him his idea of the general plan formed in his mind to suppress the rebellion movement and defeat the Southern army. "The President," continues Mr. Whitney, "now explained to me his theory of the Rebellion by the aid of the maps before him. Running his long forefinger down the map he stopped at Virginia. 'We must drive them away from here (Manassas Gap),' he said, 'and clear them out of this part of the State so that they cannot threaten us here (Washington) and get into Maryland. We must keep up a good and thorough blockade of their ports. We must march an army into east Tennessee and liberate the Union sentiment there. Finally we must rely on the people growing tired and saying to their leaders: 'We have had enough of this thing, we will bear it no longer.' "

Such was Mr. Lincoln's plan for heading off the Rebellion in the summer of 1861. How it enlarged as the war progressed, from a call for seventy-five thousand volunteers to one for five hundred thousand men and five hundred millions of dollars, is a matter now of well-known history. The war once inaugurated, it was plain the North had three things to do. These were: the opening of the Mississippi River; the blockade of the Southern ports; and

* This interview with Lincoln was written out during the war, and contains many of his peculiarities of expression.

the capture of Richmond. To accomplish these great and vital ends the deadly machinery of war was set in motion. The long-expected upheaval had come, and as the torrent of fire broke forth the people in the agony of despair looking aloft cried out, "Is our leader equal to the task?" That he was the man for the hour is now the calm, unbiassed judgment of all mankind.

The splendid victories early in 1862 in the southwest, which gave the Union cause great advance toward the entire redemption of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri from the presence of rebel armies and the prevalence of rebel influence, were counterbalanced by the dilatory movements and inactive policy of McClellan, who had been appointed in November of the preceding year to succeed the venerable Scott. The forbearance of Lincoln in dealing with McClellan was only in keeping with his well-known spirit of kindness; but, when the time came and circumstances warranted it, the soldier-statesman found that the President not only comprehended the scope of the war, but was determined to be commander-in-chief of the army and navy himself. When it pleased him to place McClellan again at the head of affairs, over the protest of such a wilful and indomitable spirit as Stanton, he displayed elements of rare leadership and evidence of uncommon capacity. His confidence in the ability and power of Grant, when the press and many of the people had turned against the hero of Vicksburg, was but another proof of his sagacity and sound judgment.

As the bloody drama of war moves along we come now to the crowning act in Mr. Lincoln's career—that sublime stroke with which his name will be forever and indissolubly united—the emancipation of the slaves. In the minds of many people there had been a crying need for the liberation of the slaves. Laborious efforts had been made to hasten the issuance by the President of the Emancipation Proclamation, but he was determined not to be forced into premature and inoperative measures. Wendell Phillips abused and held him up to public ridicule from the stump in New England. Horace Greeley turned the batteries of the New York *Tribune* against him; and, in a word, he encountered all the rancor and hostility of his old friends the Abolitionists. General Frémont having in the fall of 1861 undertaken by virtue of his authority as a military commander to emancipate the slaves in his department, the President annulled the order, which he characterized as unauthorized and premature. This precipitated an avalanche of fanatical opposition. Individuals and delegations, many claiming to have been sent by the Lord, visited him day after day, and urged immediate emancipation. In August, 1862, Horace Greeley repeated the "prayer of twenty millions of people" protesting against any further delay. Such was the pressure from the outside. All his life Mr. Lincoln had been a believer in the doctrine of gradual emancipation. He advocated it while in Congress in 1848; yet even now, as a military necessity, he could not believe the time was ripe for the

general liberation of the slaves. All the coercion from without, and all the blandishments from within, his political household failed to move him. An heroic figure, indifferent alike to praise and blame, he stood at the helm and waited. In the shadow of his lofty form the smaller men could keep up their petty conflicts. Towering thus, he overlooked them all, and fearlessly abided his time. At last the great moment came. He called his Cabinet together and read the decree. The deed was done, unalterably, unhesitatingly, irrevocably, and triumphantly. The people, at first profoundly impressed, stood aloof, but, seeing the builder beside the great structure he had so long been rearing, their confidence was abundantly renewed. It was a glorious work, "sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the constitution upon military necessity," and upon it its author "invoked the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God." I believe Mr. Lincoln wished to go down in history as the liberator of the black man. He realized to its fullest extent the responsibility and magnitude of the act, and declared it was "the central act of his administration and the great event of the nineteenth century." Always a friend of the negro, he had from boyhood waged a bitter unrelenting warfare against his enslavement. He had advocated his cause in the courts, on the stump, in the Legislature of his State and that of the nation, and, as if to crown it with a sacrifice, he sealed his devotion to the great cause of freedom with his blood. As the years roll slowly

by, and the participants in the late war drop gradually out of the ranks of men, let us pray that we may never forget their deeds of patriotic valor; but even if the details of that bloody struggle grow dim, as they will with the lapse of time, let us hope that so long as a friend of free man and free labor lives the dust of forgetfulness may never settle on the historic form of Abraham Lincoln.

As the war progressed, there was of course much criticism of Mr. Lincoln's policy, and some of his political rivals lost no opportunity to encourage opposition to his methods. He bore everything meekly and with sublime patience, but as the discontent appeared to spread he felt called upon to indicate his course. On more than one occasion he pointed out the blessings of the Emancipation Proclamation or throttled the clamorer for immediate peace. In the following letter to James C. Conkling* of Springfield, Ill., in reply to an invitation to attend a mass meeting of "Unconditional Union" men to be held at his old home, he not only disposed of the advocates of compromise, but he evinced the most admirable skill in dealing with the questions of the day;

---

* "SPRINGFIELD, ILL., January 11, 1889.

"JESSE W. WEIK, ESQ.

"Dear Sir:

"I enclose you a copy of the letter dated August 26, 1863, by Mr. Lincoln to me. It has been carefully compared with the original and is a correct copy, except that the words commencing 'I know as fully as one can know' to the words 'You say you will fight to free negroes' were not included in the original, but were telegraphed the next day with instructions to insert. The following short note in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting accompanied the letter:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
WASHINGTON, August 26, 1863.

"HON. JAMES C. CONKLING.

"My Dear Sir:

"Your letter inviting me to attend a mass meeting of Unconditional Union men, to be held at the Capitol of Illinois, on the 3rd day of September, has been received.

"It would be very agreeable to me to thus meet my old friends at my own home; but I cannot, just now, be absent from here so long as a visit there would require.

"The meeting is to be of all those who maintain unconditional devotion to the Union; and I am sure my old political friends will thank me for tendering, as I do, the nation's gratitude to those other noble men, whom no partisan malice, or partisan's hope, can make false to the nation's life.

"There are those who are dissatisfied with me. To such I would say: You desire peace; and you blame me that we do not have it. But how can we attain it? There are but three conceivable ways.

"First, to suppress the rebellion by force of arms. This I am trying to do. Are you for it? If

---

[Private.] "'WAR DEPARTMENT,
"'WASHINGTON CITY, D. C., August 27, 1862.

"'*My Dear Conkling:*

"'I cannot leave here now. Herewith is a letter instead. You are one of the best public readers. I have but one suggestion—read it very slowly. And now God bless you, and all good Union men.

"'Yours as ever,
"'A. LINCOLN.'

"Mr. Bancroft, the historian, in commenting on this letter, considers it addressed to me as one who was criticising Mr. Lincoln's policy. On the contrary, I was directed by a meeting of 'Unconditional Union' men to invite Mr. Lincoln to attend a mass meeting composed of such men, and he simply took occasion to address his opponents through the medium of the letter.

"Yours truly,
"JAMES C. CONKLING."

you are, so far we are agreed. If you are not for it, a second way is, to give up the Union. I am against this. Are you for it? If you are, you should say so plainly. If you are not for *force,* nor yet for *dissolution,* there only remains some imaginable *compromise.* I do not believe any compromise, embracing the maintenance of the Union, is now possible. All I learn leads to a directly opposite belief. The strength of the rebellion is its military —its army. That army dominates all the country and all the people within its range. Any offer of terms made by any man or men within that range in opposition to that army is simply nothing for the present, because such man or men have no power whatever to enforce their side of a compromise, if one were made with them. To illustrate: suppose refugees from the South, and peace men of the North, get together in convention and frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union; in what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania, and I think can ultimately drive it out of existence.

"But no paper compromise, to which the controllers of Lee's army are not agreed, can at all affect that army. In an effort at such compromise we should waste time, which the enemy would improve to our disadvantage; and that would be all. A compromise, to be effective, must be made either with those who control the rebel army, or with the people first liberated from the domination of that army by the success of our own army. Now allow me to assure you that no word or intimation from that rebel army or from any of the men controlling it, in relation to any peace compromise, has ever come to my knowledge or belief.

"All changes and insinuations to the contrary

are deceptive and groundless. And I promise you that, if any such proposition shall hereafter come, it shall not be rejected and kept a secret from you. I freely acknowledge myself the servant of the people, according to the bond of service—the United States Constitution, and that, as such, I am responsible to them.

"But to be plain, you are dissatisfied with me about the negro. Quite likely there is a difference of opinion between you and myself upon that subject.

"I certainly wish that all men could be free, while I suppose you do not. Yet I have neither adopted nor proposed any measure which is not consistent with even your view, provided you are for the Union. I suggested compensated emancipation; to which you replied you wished not to be taxed to buy negroes. But I had not asked you to be taxed to buy negroes, except in such way as to save you from greater taxation to save the Union exclusively by other means.

"You dislike the Emancipation Proclamation, and, perhaps, would have it retracted. You say it is unconstitutional—I think differently. I think the constitution invests its Commander-in-chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said, if so much, is that slaves are property. Is there—has there ever been—any question that by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed?

"And is it not needed wherever taking it helps us or hurts the enemy? Armies the world over destroy enemies' property when they cannot use it; and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel.

"Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes and non-combatants, male and female.

"But the proclamation, as law, either is valid or is not valid.

"If it is not valid, it needs no retraction. If it is valid, it cannot be retraced any more than the dead can be brought to life. Some of you profess to think its retraction would operate favorably for the Union.

"Why *better* after the retraction than *before* the issue?

"There was more than a year and a half of trial to suppress the rebellion before the proclamation issued, the last one hundred days of which passed under an explicit notice that it was coming, unless averted by those in revolt returning to their allegiance.

"The war has certainly progressed as favorably for us since the issue of the proclamation as before.

"*I know as fully as one can know the opinion of others that some of the commanders of our armies in the field who have given us our most important successes believe the emancipation policy and the use of the colored troops constituted the heaviest blow yet dealt to the Rebellion, and that at least one of these important successes could not have been achieved when it was but for the aid of black soldiers. Among the commanders holding these views are some who have never had any affinity with what is called abolitionism or with Republican party policies, but who held them purely as military opinions. I submit these opinions as being entitled to some weight against the objections often urged that emancipation and arming the blacks are unwise as military measures, and were not adopted as such in good faith.*

"You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you; but no matter.

---

* See note p. 540.

"Fight you, then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes.

"I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that extent it weakened the enemy in his resistance to you. Do you think differently? I thought that whatever negroes can be got to do as soldiers leaves just so much less for white soldiers to do, in saving the Union. Does it appear otherwise to you?

"But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us, if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us, they must be prompted by the strongest motive—even the promise of freedom. And the promise being made, must be kept.

"The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great North-west for it. Nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they met New England, Empire, Keystone, and Jersey, hewing their way right and left. The Sunny South too, in more colors than one, also lent a hand.

"On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one; and let none be barred who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's web-feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have

been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been, and made their tracks, thanks to all. For the great republic—for the principle it lives by and keeps alive—for man's vast future—thanks to all.

"Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon and come to stay, and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that, among free men, there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet; and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And then there will be some black men who can remember that, with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation; while I fear there will be some white ones, unable to forget that, with malignant heart and deceitful speech, they have strove to hinder it.

"Still, let us not be over-sanguine of a speedy final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in his own good time, will give us the rightful result.

"Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

The summer and fall of 1864 were marked by Lincoln's second Presidential campaign, he, and Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, for Vice-President, having been nominated at Baltimore on the 8th of June. Frémont, who had been placed in the field by a convention of malcontents at Cleveland, Ohio, had withdrawn in September, and the contest was left to Lincoln and General George B. McClellan, the

nominee of the Democratic convention at Chicago. The canvass was a heated and bitter one. Dissatisfied elements appeared everywhere. The Judge Advocate-General of the army (Holt) created a sensation by the publication of a report giving conclusive proof of the existence of an organized secret association at the North, controlled by prominent men in the Democratic party, whose objects were the overthrow by revolution of the administration in the interest of the rebellion.* Threats were rife

---

* "Mr. Lincoln was advised, and I also so advised him, that the various military trials in the Northern and Border States, where the courts were free and untrammelled, were unconstitutional and wrong; that they would not and ought not to be sustained by the Supreme Court; that such proceedings were dangerous to liberty. He said he was opposed to hanging; that he did not like to kill his fellow-man; that if the world had no butchers but himself it would go bloodless. When Joseph E. McDonald went to Lincoln about these military trials and asked him not to execute the men who had been convicted by the military commission in Indiana he answered that he would not hang them, but added, 'I'll keep them in prison awhile to keep them from killing the Government.' I am fully satisfied therefore that Lincoln was opposed to these military commissions, especially in the Northern States, where everything was open and free."—David Davis, statement, September 10, 1866, to W. H. H.

"I was counsel for Bowles, Milligan, *et al.*, who had been convicted of conspiracy by miliatry tribunal in Indiana. Early in 1865 I went to Washington to confer with the President, whom I had known, and with whom in earlier days I had practised law on the circuit in Illinois. My clients had been sentenced, and unless the President interfered were to have been executed. Mr. Hendricks, who was then in the Senate, and who seemed to have little faith in the probability of executive clemency, accompanied me to the White House. It was early in the evening, and so many callers and visitors had preceded us we anticipated a very brief interview. Much to our surprise we found Mr. Lincoln in a singularly cheerful and reminiscent mood. He

of a revolution at the North, especially in New York City, if Mr. Lincoln were elected. Mr. Lincoln went steadily on in his own peculiar way. In a preceding chapter Mr. Swett has told us how indifferent he appeared to be regarding any efforts to be made in his behalf. He did his duty as President, and rested secure in the belief that he would be re-elected whatever might be done for or against him. The importance of retaining Indiana in the column of Republican States was not to be overlooked. How the President viewed it, and how he proposed to secure the vote of the State, is shown in the following letter written to General Sherman:

"EXECUTIVE MANSION,
"WASHINGTON, September 19, 1864.

"MAJOR GENERAL SHERMAN:

"The State election of Indiana occurs on the 11th of October, and the loss of it to the friends of the Government would go far towards losing the whole Union cause. The bad effect upon the November election, and especially the giving the State government to those who will oppose the war in every

---

kept us with him till almost eleven o'clock. He went over the history of my clients' crime as shown by the papers in the case, and suggested certain errors and imperfections in the record. The papers, he explained, would have to be returned for correction, and that would consume no little time. 'You may go home, Mr. McDonald,' he said, with a pleased expression, 'and I'll send for you when the papers get back; but I apprehend and hope there will be such a jubilee over yonder,' he added, pointing to the hills of Virginia just across the river, 'we shall none of us want any more killing done.' The papers started on their long and circuitous journey, and sure enough, before they reached Washington again Mr. Lincoln's prediction of the return of peace had proved true."—Hon. Joseph E. McDonald, statement, August 28, 1888, to J. W. W.

possible way, are too much to risk if it can be avoided. The draft proceeds, notwithstanding its strong tendency to lose us the State. Indiana is the only important State voting in October whose soldiers cannot vote in the field. Anything you can safely do to let her soldiers or any part of them go home and vote at the State election will be greatly in point. They need not remain for the Presidential election, but may return to you at once. This is in no sense an order, but is merely intended to impress you with the importance to the army itself of your doing all you safely can, yourself being the judge of what you can safely do.

"Yours truly,

"A. LINCOLN."*

The election resulted in an overwhelming victory for Lincoln. He received a majority of over four hundred thousand in the popular vote—a larger majority than had ever been received by any other President up to that time. He carried not only Indiana, but all the New England States, New York, Pennsylvania, all the Western States, West Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, and the newly admitted State of Nevada. McClellan carried but three states: New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky. The result, as Grant so aptly expressed it in his telegram of congratulation, was "a victory worth more to the country than a battle won." A second time Lincoln stood in front of the great Capitol to take the oath of office administered by his former rival, Salmon P. Chase, whom he himself had appointed to succeed the deceased Roger B.

* Unpublished MS.

Taney. The problem of the war was now fast working its own solution. The cruel stain of slavery had been effaced from the national escutcheon, and the rosy morn of peace began to dawn behind the breaking clouds of the great storm.* Lincoln, firm

---

* Bearing on the mission of the celebrated Peace Commission the following bit of inside history is not without interest:

"I had given notice that at one o'clock on the 31st of January I would call a vote on the proposed constitutional amendment abolishing slavery in the United States. The opposition caught up a report that morning that Peace Commissioners were on the way to the city or were in the city. Had this been true I think the proposed amendment would have failed, as a number who voted for it could easily have been prevailed upon to vote against it on the ground that the passage of such a proposition would be offensive to the commissioners. Accordingly I wrote the President this note:

"'HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
"'January 31, 1865.

"'*Dear Sir:*

"'The report is in circulation in the House that Peace Commissioners are on their way or in the city, and is being used against us. If it is true, I fear we shall lose the bill. Please authorize me to contradict it, if it is not true.

"'Respectfully,
"'J. M. ASHLEY.'

To the President.

Almost immediately came the reply, written on the back of my note:

"'So far as I know there are no Peace Commissioners in the city or likely to be in it. "'A. LINCOLN.'
January 31, 1865.

"Mr. Lincoln knew that the commissioners were then on their way to Fortress Monroe, where he expected to meet them, and afterwards did meet them. You see how he answered my note for my purposes, and yet how truly. You know how he afterwards met the so-called commission, whom he determined at the time he wrote this note should not come to the city. One or two gentlemen were present when he wrote the note, to whom he read it before sending it to me."—J. M. Ashley, M. C., letter, November 23, 1866, MS.

but kind, in his inaugural address bade his misguided brethern of the South come back. With a fraternal affection characteristic of the man, and strictly in keeping with his former utterances, he asked for the return of peace. "With malice towards none, with charity for all," he implored his fellow-countrymen, "with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." With the coming of spring the great armies, awakening from their long winter's sleep, began preparations for the closing campaign. Sherman had already made that grandest march of modern times, from the mountains of Tennessee through Georgia to the sea, while Grant, with stolid indifference to public criticism and newspaper abuse, was creeping steadily on through swamp and ravine to Richmond. Thomas had defeated Hood in Tennessee, sending the latter back with his army demoralized, cut in pieces, and ruined. The young and daring Sheridan had driven Early out of the Shenandoah Valley after a series of brilliant engagements. The "Kearsarge" had sunk the "Alabama" in foreign waters. Farragut had captured Mobile, and the Union forces held undisputed possession of the West and the Mississippi Valley from the lakes to the gulf. Meanwhile Sherman, undaunted by the perils of a further march through the enemy's country, return-

ing from the sea, was aiming for Richmond, where Grant, with bull-dog tenacity, held Lee firmly in his grasp. Erelong, the latter, with his shattered army reduced to half its original numbers, evacuated Richmond, with Grant in close pursuit. A few days later the boys in blue overtook those in gray at Appomattox Court-house, and there, under the warm rays of an April sun, the life was at last squeezed out of the once proud but now prostrate Confederacy. "The sun of peace had fairly risen. The incubus of war that had pressed upon the nation's heart for four long, weary years was lifted; and the nation sprang to its feet with all possible demonstrations of joyous exultation."

Mr. Lincoln himself had gone to the scene of hostilities in Virginia. He watched the various military manœuvres and operations, which involved momentous consequences to the country; he witnessed some of the bloody engagements participated in by the army of the Potomac. Within a day after its surrender he followed the victorious Union army into the city of Richmond. In this unfortunate city—once the proud capital of Virginia—now smoking and in ruins, he beheld the real horrors of grim war. Here too he realized in a bountiful measure the earnest gratitude of the colored people, who everywhere crowded around him and with cries of intense exultation greeted him as their deliverer. He now returned to Washington, not like Napoleon fleeing sorrowfully from Waterloo bearing the tidings of his own defeat, but with joy proclaiming the era of Union victory and peace

among men. "The war was over. The great rebellion which for four long years had been assailing the nation's life was quelled. Richmond, the rebel capital, was taken; Lee's army had surrendered; and the flag of the Union was floating in reassured supremacy over the whole of the National domain. Friday, the 14th of April, the anniversary of the surrender of Fort Sumter in 1861 by Major Anderson to the rebel forces, had been designated by the Government as the day on which the same officer should again raise the American flag upon the fort in the presence of an assembled multitude, and with ceremonies befitting so auspicious an occasion. The whole land rejoiced at the return of peace and the prospect of renewed prosperity to the country. President Lincoln shared this common joy, but with a deep intensity of feeling which no other man in the whole land could ever know. He saw the full fruition of the great work which had rested so heavily on his hands and heart for four years past. He saw the great task—as momentous as had ever fallen to the lot of man—which he had approached with such unfeigned diffidence, nearly at an end. The agonies of war had passed away; he had won the imperishable renown which is the reward of those who save their country; and he could devote himself now to the welcome task of healing the wounds which war had made, and consolidating by a wise and magnanimous policy the severed sections of our common Union. His heart was full of the generous sentiments which these circumstances were so well cal-

culated to inspire. He was cheerful and hopeful of the success of his broad plans for the treatment of the conquered people of the South. With all the warmth of his loving nature, after the four years of storm through which he had been compelled to pass, he viewed the peaceful sky on which the opening of his second term had dawned. His mind was free from forebodings and filled only with thoughts of kindness and of future peace." But alas for the vanity of human confidence! The demon of assassination lurked near. In the midst of the general rejoicing at the return of peace Mr. Lincoln was stricken down by the assassin, John Wilkes Booth, in Ford's Theatre at Washington. The story of his death, though oft repeated, is the saddest and most impressive page in American history. I cannot well forbear reproducing its painful and tragic details here.*

"Mr. Lincoln for years had a presentiment that he would reach a high place and then be stricken down in some tragic way. He took no precautions to keep out of the way of danger. So many threats had been made against him that his friends were alarmed, and frequently urged him not to go out unattended. To all their entreaties he had the same answer: 'If they kill me the next man will be just as bad for them. In a country like this, where our habits are simple, and must be, assassina-

---

* For the details of the assassination and the capture and subsequent history of the conspirators, I am indebted to Mrs. Gertrude Garrison, of New York, who has given the subject no little study and investigation. J. W. W.

tion is always possible, and will come if they are determined upon it.'

"Whatever premonition of his tragic fate he may have had, there is nothing to prove that he felt the nearness of the awful hour. Doomed men rise and go about their daily duties as unoppressed, often, as those whose paths know no shadow. On that never-to-be-forgotten 14th of April President Lincoln passed the day in the usual manner. In the morning his son, Captain Robert Lincoln, breakfasted with him. The young man had just returned from the capitulation of Lee, and he described in detail all the circumstances of that momentous episode of the close of the war, to which the President listened with the closest interest. After breakfast the President spent an hour with Speaker Colfax, talking about his future policy, about to be submitted to his Cabinet. At eleven o'clock he met the Cabinet. General Grant was present. He spent the afternoon with Governor Oglesby, Senator Yates, and other friends from Illinois. He was invited by the manager of Ford's theatre, in Washington, to attend in the evening a performance of the play, 'Our American Cousin,' with Laura Keene as the leading lady. This play, now so well known to all play-goers, in which the late Sothern afterward made fortune and fame, was then comparatively unheralded. Lincoln was fond of the drama. Brought up in a provincial way, in the days when theatres were unknown outside of the larger cities, the beautiful art of the actor was fresh and delightful to him.

He loved Shakespeare, and never lost an opportunity of seeing his character rendered by the masters of dramatic art. But on that evening, it is said, he was not eager to go. The play was new, consequently not alluring to him; but he yielded to the wishes of Mrs. Lincoln and went. They took with them Miss Harris and Major Rathbone, daughter and stepson of Senator Harris, of New York.

"The theatre was crowded. At 9:20 the President and his party entered. The audience rose and cheered enthusiastically as they passed to the 'state box' reserved for them. Little did anyone present dream that within the hour enthusiasm would give place to shrieks of horror. It was ten o'clock when Booth came upon the scene to enact the last and greatest tragedy of the war. He had planned carefully, but not correctly. A good horse awaited him at the rear of the theatre, on which he intended to ride into friendly shelter among the hills of Maryland. He made his way to the President's box—a double one in the second tier, at the left of the stage. The separating partition had been removed, and both boxes thrown into one.

"Booth entered the theatre nonchalantly, glanced at the stage with apparent interest, then slowly worked his way around into the outer passage leading toward the box occupied by the President. At the end of an inner passage leading to the box door, one of the President's "messengers" was stationed to prevent unwelcome intrusions. Booth presented a card to him, stating that Mr. Lincoln had sent

for him, and was permitted to pass. After gaining an entrance and closing the hall door, he took a piece of board prepared for the occasion, and placed one end of it in an indentation in the wall, about four feet from the floor, and the other against the molding of the door panel a few inches higher, making it impossible for any one to enter from without. The box had two doors. He bored a gimlet hole in the panel of one, reaming it out with his knife, so as to leave it a little larger than a buckshot on the inside, while on the other side it was big enough to give his eye a wide range. Both doors had spring locks. To secure against their being locked he had loosened the screws with which the bolts were fastened.

"So deliberately had he planned that the very seats in the box had been arranged to suit his purpose by an accomplice, one Spangler, an attaché of the theatre. The President sat in the left-hand corner of the box, nearest the audience, in an easy arm-chair. Next him, on the right, sat Mrs. Lincoln. A little distance to the right of both, Miss Harris was seated, with Major Rathbone at her left, and a little in the rear of Mrs. Lincoln, who, intent on the play, was leaning forward, with one hand resting on her husband's knee. The President was leaning upon one hand, and with the other was toying with a portion of the drapery. His face was partially turned to the audience, and wore a pleasant smile.

"The assassin swiftly entered the box through the door at the right, and the next instant fired.

The ball entered just behind the President's left ear, and, though not producing instantaneous death, completely obliterated all consciousness.

"Major Rathbone heard the report, and an instant later saw the murderer, about six feet from the President, and grappled with him, but his grasp was shaken off. Booth dropped his pistol and drew a long, thin, deadly-looking knife, with which he wounded the major. Then, touching his left hand to the railing of the box, he vaulted over to the stage, eight or nine feet below. In that descent an unlooked-for and curious thing happened, which foiled all the plans of the assassin and was the means of bringing him to bay at last. Lincoln's box was draped with the American flag, and Booth, in jumping, caught his spur in its folds, tearing it down and spraining his ankle. He crouched as he fell, falling upon one knee, but soon straightened himself and stalked theatrically across the stage, brandishing his knife and shouting the State motto of Virginia, '*Sic semper tyrannis!*' afterward adding, 'The South is avenged!' He made his exit on the opposite side of the stage, passing Miss Keene as he went out. A man named Stewart, a tall lawyer of Washington, was the only person with presence of mind enough to spring upon the stage and follow him, and he was too late.

"It had all been done so quickly and dramatically that many in the audience were dazed, and could not understand that anything not a part of the play had happened. When, at last, the awful truth was known to them there ensued a scene, the

like of which was never known in a theatre before. Women shrieked, sobbed, and fainted. Men cursed and raved, or were dumb with horror and amazement. Miss Keene stepped to the front and begged the frightened and dismayed audience to be calm. Then she entered the President's box with water and stimulants. Medical aid was summoned and came with flying feet, but came too late. The murderer's bullet had done its wicked work well. The President hardly stirred in his chair, and never spoke or showed any signs of consciousness again.

"They carried him immediately to the house of Mr. Petersen, opposite the theatre, and there at 7:22 the next moring, the 15th of April, he died.

"The night of Lincoln's assassination was a memorable one in Washington. Secretary Seward was attacked and wounded while lying in bed with a broken arm.

"The murder of the President put the authorities on their guard against a wide-reaching conspiracy, and threw the public into a state of terror. The awful event was felt even by those who knew not of it. Horsemen clattered through the silent streets of Washington, spreading the sad tidings, and the telegraph wires carried the terrible story everywhere. The nation awakened from its dream of peace on the 15th of April, 1865, to learn that its protector, leader, friend, and restorer had been laid low by a stage-mad 'avenger.' W. O. Stoddard, in his 'Life of Lincoln,' says: 'It was as if there had been a death in every house throughout

the land. By both North and South alike the awful news was received with a shudder and a momentary spasm of unbelief. Then followed one of the most remarkable spectacles in the history of the human race, for there is nothing else at all like it on record. Bells had tolled before at the death of a loved ruler, but never did all bells toll so mournfully as they did that day. Business ceased. Men came together in public meetings as if by a common impulse, and party lines and sectional hatreds seemed to be obliterated.

"The assassination took place on Friday evening, and on the following Sunday funeral services were held in all the churches in the land, and every church was draped in mourning."

The death of Mr. Lincoln was an indescribable shock to his fellow countrymen. The exultation of victory over the final and successful triumph of Union arms was suddenly changed to the lamentations of grief. In every household throughout the length and breadth of the land there was a dull and bitter agony as the telegraph bore tidings of the awful deed. The public heart, filled with joy over the news from Appomattox, now sank low with a sacred terror as the sad tidings from the Capitol came in. In the great cities of the land all business instantly ceased. Flags drooped half-mast from every winged messenger of the sea, from every church spire, and from every public building. Thousands upon thousands, drawn by a common feeling, crowded around every place of public resort and listened eagerly to whatever any public speaker

chose to say. Men met in the streets and pressed each other's hands in silence, and burst into tears. The whole nation, which the previous day had been jubilant and hopeful, was precipitated into the depths of a profound and tender woe. It was a memorable spectacle to the world—a whole nation plunged into heartfelt grief and the deepest sorrow.

The body of the dead President, having been embalmed, was removed from the house in which the death occurred to the White House, and there appropriate funeral services were held. After the transfer of the remains to the Capital, where the body was exposed to view in the Rotunda for a day, preparations were made for the journey to the home of the deceased in Illinois. On the following day (April 21) the funeral train left Washington amid the silent grief of the thousands who had gathered to witness its departure. At all the great cities along the route stops were made, and an opportunity was given the people to look on the face of the illustrious dead. The passage of this funeral train westward through country, village, and city, winding across the territory of vast States, along a track of more than fifteen hundred miles, was a pageant without a parallel in the history of the continent or the world. At every halt in the sombre march vast crowds, such as never before had collected together, filed past the catafalque for a glimpse of the dead chieftain's face. Farmers left their farms, workmen left their shops, societies and soldiers marched in solid columns, and the great cities poured forth their population in countless masses. From Washington the funeral

train moved to Baltimore, thence to Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, Chicago, and at last to Springfield.

As the funeral cortége passed through New York it was reverently gazed upon by a mass of humanity impossible to enumerate. No ovation could be so eloquent as the spectacle of the vast population, hushed and bareheaded under the bright spring sky, gazing upon his coffin. Lincoln's own words over the dead at Gettysburg came to many as the stately car went by: "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here."

It was remembered, too, that on the 22d of February, 1861, as he raised the American flag over Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, he spoke of the sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not only to this country, but, "I hope," he said, "to the world for all future time. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated upon this spot than surrender it."

When he died the veil that hid his greatness was torn aside, and the country then knew what it had possessed and lost in him. A New York paper, of April 29, 1865, said: "No one who personally knew him but will now feel that the deep, furrowed sadness of his face seemed to forecast his fate. The genial gentleness of his manner, his homely simplicity, the cheerful humor that never failed, are now seen to have been but the tender light that played

around the rugged heights of his strong and noble nature. It is small consolation that he died at the moment of the war when he could best be spared, for no nation is ever ready for the loss of such a friend. But it is something to remember that he lived to see the slow day breaking. Like Moses, he had marched with us through the wilderness. From the height of patriotic vision he beheld the golden fields of the future waving in peace and plenty. He beheld, and blessed God, but was not to enter in."

In a discourse delivered on Lincoln on the 23d of that month, Henry Ward Beecher said:

"And now the martyr is moving in triumphal march, mightier than when alive. The nation rises up at every stage of his coming. Cities and states are his pall-bearers, and the cannon speaks the hours with solemn progression. Dead, dead, dead, he yet speaketh. Is Washington dead? Is Hampden dead? Is any man that was ever fit to live dead? Disenthralled of flesh, risen to the unobstructed sphere where passion never comes, he begins his illimitable work. His life is now grafted upon the infinite, and will be fruitful as no earthly life can be. Pass on, thou that hast overcome. Ye people, behold the martyr whose blood, as so many articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty."

The funeral train reached Springfield on the 3d of May. The casket was borne to the State House and placed in Representative Hall—the very chamber in which in 1854 the deceased had pronounced that fearful invective against the sin of human

slavery. The doors were thrown open, the coffin lid was removed, and we who had known the illustrious dead in other days, and before the nation lay its claim upon him, moved sadly though and looked for the last time on the silent, upturned face of our departed friend. All day long and through the night a stream of people filed reverently by the catafalque. Some of them were his colleagues at the bar; some his old friends from New Salem; some crippled soldiers fresh from the battle-fields of the war; and some were little children who, scarce realizing the impressiveness of the scent, were destined to live and tell their children yet to be born the sad story of Lincoln's death.

At ten o'clock in the morning of the second day, as a choir of two-hundred-and-fifty voices sang "Peace, Troubled Soul," the lid of the casket was shut down forever. The remains were borne outside and placed in a hearse, which moved at the head of a procession in charge of General Joseph Hooker to Oak Ridge Cemetery. There Bishop Matthew Simpson delivered an eloquent and impressive funeral oration, and Rev. Dr. Gurley, of Washington, offered up the closing prayer. While the choir chanted "Unveil Thy Bosom, Faithful Tomb," the vault door opened and received to its final rest all that was mortal of Abraham Lincoln.

"It was soon known that the murder of Lincoln was one result of a conspiracy which had for its victims Secretary Seward and probably Vice-President Johnson, Secretary Stanton, General Grant, and perhaps others. Booth had left a card for Mr.

Johnson the day before, possibly with the intention of killing him. Mr. Seward received wounds, from which he soon recovered. Grant, who was to have accompanied Lincoln to the theatre on the night of the assassination, and did not, escaped unassailed. The general conspiracy was poorly planned and lamely executed. It involved about twenty-five persons. Mrs. Surratt, David C. Harold, Lewis Payne, Edward Spangler, Michael O'Loughlin, J. W. Atzerodt, Samuel Arnold, and Dr. Samuel Mudd, who set Booth's leg, which was dislocated by the fall from the stage-box, were among the number captured and tried.

"After the assassination Booth escaped unmolested from the theatre, mounted his horse, and rode away, accompanied by Harold, into Maryland. Cavalrymen scoured the country, and eleven days after the shooting discovered them in a barn on Garrett's farm, near Port Royal on the Rappahannock. The soldiers surrounded the barn and demanded a surrender. After the second demand Harold surrendered, under a shower of curses from Booth, but Booth refused, declaring that he would never be taken alive. The captain of the squad then fired the barn. A correspondent thus describes the scene:

" 'The blaze lit up the recesses of the great barn till every wasp's nest and cobweb in the roof were luminous, flinging streaks of red and violet across the tumbled farm gear in the corner. They tinged the beams, the upright columns, the barricades, where clover and timothy piled high held toward

the hot incendiary their separate straws for the funeral pile. They bathed the murderer's retreat in a beautiful illumination, and, while in bold outlines his figure stood revealed, they rose like an impenetrable wall to guard from sight the hated enemy who lit them. Behind the blaze, with his eye to a crack, Colonel Conger saw Wilkes Booth standing upright upon a crutch. At the gleam of fire Booth dropped his crutch and carbine, and on both hands crept up to the spot to espy the incendiary and shoot him dead. His eyes were lustrous with fever, and swelled and rolled in terrible beauty, while his teeth were fixed, and he wore the expression of one in the calmness before frenzy. In vain he peered, with vengeance in his look; the blaze that made him visible concealed his enemy. A second he turned glaring at the fire, as if to leap upon it and extinguish it, but it had made such headway that be dismissed the thought. As calmly as upon the battle-field a veteran stands amidst the hail of ball and shell and plunging iron, Booth turned and pushed the door, carbine in poise, and the last resolve of death, which we name despair, set on his high, bloodless forehead.

"'Just then Sergeant Boston Corbett fired through a crevice and shot Booth in the neck. He was carried out of the barn and laid upon the grass, and there died about four hours afterwards. Before his misguided soul passed into the silence of death he whispered something which Lieutenant Baker bent down to hear. "Tell mother I die for my country," he said, faintly. Reviving a moment later he re-

peated the words, and added, "I thought I did for the best."

"His days of hiding and fleeing from his pursuers had left him pale, haggard, dirty, and unkempt. He had cut off his mustache and cropped his hair close to his head, and he and Harold both wore the Confederate gray uniform.'

"Booth's body was taken to Washington, and a post mortem examination of it held on board the monitor "Montauk," and on the night of the 27th of April it was given in charge of two men in a row-boat, who, it is claimed, disposed of it in secrecy—how, none but themselves know. Numerous stories have been told of the final resting-place of that hated dead man. Whoever knows the truth of it tells it not.

"Sergeant Corbett, who shot Booth, fired without orders. The last instructions given by Colonel Baker to Colonel Conger and Lieutenant Baker were: 'Don't shoot Booth, but take him alive.' Corbett was something of a fanatic, and for a breach of discipline had once been court-martialled and sentenced to be shot. The order, however, was not executed, but he had been drummed out of the regiment. He belonged to Company L of the Sixteenth New York Cavalry. He was English by birth, but was brought up in this country, and learned the trade of hat finisher. While living in Boston he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. Never having been baptized, he was at a loss to know what name to adopt, but after making it a subject of prayer he took the name of Boston,

in honor of the place of his conversion. He was ever undisciplined and erratic. He is said to be living in Kansas, and draws a pension from the Government.

"Five of the conspirators were tried, and three, Payne, Harold, and Mrs. Surratt, were hanged. Dr. Mudd was sent to the Dry Tortugas for a period of years, and there did such good work among the yellow-fever sufferers during an epidemic that he was pardoned and returned to this country. He died only about two years ago at his home in Maryland, near Washington. Atzerodt was sent to the Dry Tortugas also, and died there years ago. John Surratt fled to Italy, and there entered the Papal guards. He was discovered by Archbishop Hughes, and by the courtesy of the Italian Government, though the extradition laws did not cover this case, was delivered over to the United States for trial. At his first trial the jury hung; at the second, in which Edwards Pierrepont was the Government counsel, Surratt got off on the plea of limitations. He undertook to lecture, and began at Rockville, Md. The *Evening Star,* of Washington, reported the lecture, which was widely copied, and was of such a feeble character that it killed him as a lecturer. He went to Baltimore, where, it is said, he still lives. Spangler, the scene-shifter, who was an accomplice of Booth, was sent to the Dry Tortugas, served out his term and died about ten years ago. McLoughlin, who was arrested because of his acquaintance with the conspirators, was sent to the Dry Tortugas and there died.

"Ford's Theatre was never played in after that memorable night. Ten or twelve days after the assassination Ford attempted to open it, but Stanton prevented it, and the Government bought the theatre for $100,000, and converted it into a medical museum. Ford was a Southern sympathizer. He ran two theatres until four years ago, one in Washington and one in Baltimore. Alison Naylor, the livery man who let Booth have his horse, still lives in Washington. Major Rathbone, who was in the box with Lincoln when he was shot, died within the last four years. Stewart, the man who jumped on the stage to follow Booth, and announced to the audience that he had escaped through the alley, died lately. Strange, but very few persons can now be found who were at the theatre that night. Laura Keene died a few years ago.

"Booth the assassin was the third son of the eminent English tragedian Junius Brutus Booth, and the brother of the equally renowned Edwin Booth. He was only twenty-six years old when he figured as the chief actor in this horrible drama. He began his dramatic career as John Wilkes, and as a stock actor gained a fair reputation, but had not achieved any special success. He had played chiefly in the South and West, and but a few times in New York. Some time before the assassination of Lincoln he had abandoned his profession on account of a bronchial affection. Those who knew him and saw him on that fatal Friday say that he was restless, like one who, consciously or unconsciously, was overshadowed by some awful fate.

He knew that the President and his party intended to be present at Ford's theatre in the evening, and he asked an acquaintance if he should attend the performance, remarking that if he did he would see some unusually fine acting. He was a handsome man. His eyes were large and dark, his hair dark and inclined to curl, his features finely moulded, his form tall, and his address pleasing."

Frederick Stone, counsel for Harold after Booth's death, is authority for the statement that the occasion for Lincoln's assassination was the sentiment expressed by the President in a speech delivered from the steps of the White House on the night of April 11, when he said: "If universal amnesty is granted to the insurgents I cannot see how I can avoid exacting in return universal suffrage, or at lease suffrage on the basis of intelligence and military service." Booth was standing before Mr. Lincoln on the outskirts of the crowd. "That means nigger citizenship," he said to Harold by his side. "Now, by God! I'll put him through." But whatever may have been the incentive, Booth seemed to crave the reprehensible fame that attaches to a bold and dramatically wicked deed. He may, it is true, have been mentally unhinged, but, whether sane or senseless, he made for himself an infamous and endless notoriety when he murdered the patient, forbearing man who had directed our ship of state through the most tempestuous waters it ever encountered.

In the death of Lincoln the South, prostrate and bleeding, lost a friend; and his unholy taking-off

at the very hour of the assured supremacy of the Union cause ran the iron into the heart of the North. His sun went down suddenly, and whelmed the country in a darkness which was felt by every heart; but far up the clouds sprang apart, and soon the golden light, flooding the heavens with radiance, illuminated every uncovered brow with the hope of a fair to-morrow. His name will ever be the watchword of liberty. His work is finished, and sealed forever with the veneration given to the blood of martyrs. Yesterday a man reviled and abused, a target for the shafts of malice and hatred: to-day an apostle. Yesterday a power: to-day a prestige, sacred, irresistible. The life and the tragic death of Mr. Lincoln mark an epoch in history from which dates the unqualified annunication by the American people of the greatest truth in the bible of republicanism—the very keystone of that arch of human rights which is destined to overshadow and remodel every government upon the earth. The glorious brightness of that upper world, as it welcomed his faint and bleeding spirit, broke through upon the earth at his exit—it was the dawn of a day growing brighter as the grand army of freedom follows in the march of time.

Lincoln's place in history will be fixed—aside from his personal characteristics—by the events and results of the war. As a great political leader who quelled a rebellion of eight millions of people, liberated four millions of slaves, and demonstrated to the world the ability of the people to maintain

a government of themselves, by themselves, for themselves, he will assuredly occupy no insignificant place.

To accomplish the great work of preserving the Union cost the land a great price. Generations of Americans yet unborn, and humanity everywhere, for years to come will mourn the horrors and sacrifices of the first civil war in the United States; but above the blood of its victims, above the bones of its dead, above the ashes of desolate hearths, will arise the colossal figure of Abraham Lincoln as the most acceptable sacrifice offered by the nineteenth century in expiation of the great crime of the seventeenth. Above all the anguish and tears of that immense hecatomb will appear the shade of Lincoln as the symbol of hope and of pardon.

This is the true lesson of Lincoln's life: real and enduring greatness, that will survive the corrosion and abrasion of time, of change, and of progress, must rest upon character. In certain brilliant and what is understood to be most desirable endowments how many Americans have surpassed him. Yet how he looms above them all! Not eloquence, nor logic, nor grasp of thought; not statesmanship, nor power of command, nor courage; not any nor all of these have made him what he is, but these, in the degree in which he possessed them, conjoined to those qualities comprised in the terms character, have given him his fame—have made him for all time to come the great American, the grand, central figure in American—perhaps the world's—history.

CHAPTER XX.*

Soon after the death of Mr. Lincoln Dr. J. G. Holland came out to Illinois from his home in Massachusetts to gather up materials for a life of the dead President. The gentleman spent several days with me, and I gave him all the assistance that lay in my power. I was much pleased with him, and awaited with not a little interest the appearance of his book. I felt sure that even after my long and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln I never fully knew and understood him, and I therefore wondered what sort of a description Dr. Holland, after interviewing Lincoln's old-time friends, would make of his individual characteristics. When the book appeared he said this: "The writer has conversed with multitudes of men who claimed to know Mr. Lincoln intimately: yet there are not two of the whole number who agree in their estimate of him. The fact was that he rarely showed more than one aspect of himself to one man. He opened himself to men in different directions. To illustrate the effect of the peculiarity of Mr. Lincoln's intercourse with men it may be said that men who knew him through all his professional and political life offered

* The substance of this chapter I delivered in the form of a lecture to a Springfield audience in 1866. W. H. H.

opinions as diametrically opposite as these, viz.: that he was a very ambitious man, and that he was without a particle of ambition; that he was one of the saddest men that ever lived, and that he was one of the jolliest men that ever lived; that he was very religious, but that he was not a Christian; that he was a Christian, but did not know it; that he was so far from being a religious man or a Christian that 'the less said upon that subject the better;' that he was the most cunning man in America, and that he had not a particle of cunning in him; that he had the strongest personal attachments, and that he had no personal attachments at all—only a general good feeling towards everybody; that he was a man of indomitable will, and that he was a man almost without a will; that he was a tyrant, and that he was the softest-hearted, most brotherly man that ever lived; that he was remarkable for his pure-mindedness, and that he was the foulest in his jests and stories of any man in the country; that he was a witty man, and that he was only a retailer of the wit of others; that his apparent candor and fairness were only apparent, and that they were as real as his head and his hands; that he was a boor, and that he was in all respects a gentleman; that he was a leader of the people, and that he was always led by the people; that he was cool and impassive, and that he was susceptible of the strongest passions. It is only by tracing these separate streams of impression back to their fountain that we are able to arrive at anything like a competent comprehension of the man, or to learn why he came to be

held in such various estimation. Men caught only separate aspects of his charater—only the fragments that were called into exhibition by their own qualities."*

Dr. Holland had only found what Lincoln's friends had always experienced in their relations with him—that he was a man of many moods and

---

* I beg to note here in passing the estimate of Lincoln's mind and character by one of his colleagues at the bar in Springfield who still survives, but whose name, for certain reasons, I am constrained to withhold. I still retain the original MS. written by him twenty years ago. "I am particularly requested," he says, "to write out my opinion of the mind of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, and I consent to do so without any other motive than to comply with the request of a brother lawyer, for, if I know myself, no other motive would induce me to do it, because, while Mr. Lincoln and I were always good friends, I believe myself wholly indifferent to the future of his memory. The opinion I now have was formed by a personal and professional acquaintance of over ten years, and has not been altered or influenced by any of his promotions in public life. The adulation by base multitudes of a living, and the pageantry surrounding a dead, President do not shake my well-settled convictions of the man's mental calibre. Physiologically and phrenologically the man was a sort of monstrosity. His frame was large, long, bony, and muscular; his head, small and disproportionately shaped. He had large, square jaws; large, heavy nose; small, lascivious mouth; and soft, tender, bluish eyes. I would say he was a cross between Venus and Hercules. I believe it to be inconsistent with the laws of human organization for any such creature to possess a mind capable of anything called great. The man's mind partook of the incongruities of his body. He had no mind not possessed by the most ordinary of men. It was simply the peculiarity of his mental and the oddity of his physical structure, as well as the qualities of his heart that singled him out from the mass of men. His native love of justice, truth, and humanity led his mind a great way in the accomplishment of his objects in life. That passion or sentiment steadied and determined an otherwise indecisive mind."

many sides. He never revealed himself entirely to any one man, and therefore he will always to a certain extent remain enveloped in doubt. Even those who were with him through long years of hard study and under constantly varying circumstances can hardly say they knew him through and through. I always believed I could read him as thoroughly as any man, and yet he was so different in many respects from any other one I ever met before or since his time that I cannot say I comprehended him. In this chapter I give my recollection of his individual characteristics as they occur to me, and allow the world to form its own opinion. If my recollection of the man destroys any other person's ideal, I cannot help it. By a faithful and lifelike description of Lincoln the man, and a study of his peculiar and personal traits, perhaps some of the apparent contradictions met with by Dr. Holland will have melted from sight.

Mr. Lincoln was six feet four inches high, and when he left the city of his home for Washington was fifty-one years old, having good health and no gray hairs, or but few, on his head. He was thin, wiry, sinewy, raw-boned; thin through the breast to the back, and narrow across the shoulders; standing he leaned forward—was what may be called stoop-shouldered, inclining to the consumptive by build. His usual weight was one hundred and eighty pounds. His organization—rather his structure and functions—worked slowly. His blood had to run a long distance from his heart to the extremities of his frame, and his nerve force

had to travel through dry ground a long distance before his muscles were obedient to his will. His structure was loose and leathery; his body was shrunk and shrivelled; he had dark skin, dark hair, and looked woe-struck. The whole man, body and mind, worked slowly, as if it needed oiling. Physically he was a very powerful man, lifting with ease four hundred, and in one case six hundred, pounds. His mind was like his body, and worked slowly but strongly. Hence there was very little bodily or mental wear and tear in him. This peculiarity in his construction gave him great advantage over other men in public life. No man in America—scarcely a man in the world—could have stood what Lincoln did in Washington and survived through more than one term of the Presidency.

When he walked he moved cautiously but firmly; his long arms and giant hands swung down by his side. He walked with even tread, the inner sides of his feet being parallel. He put the whole foot flat down on the ground at once, not landing on the heel; he likewise lifted his foot all at once, not rising from the toe, and hence he had no spring to his walk. His walk was undulatory—catching and pocketing tire, weariness, and pain, all up and down his person, and thus preventing them from locating. The first impression of a stranger, or a man who did not observe closely, was that his walk implied shrewdness and cunning—that he was a tricky man; but, in reality, it was the walk of caution and firmness. In sitting down on a common chair he was no taller than ordinary men. His legs and arms

were abnormally, unnaturally long, and in undue proportion to the remainder of his body. It was only when he stood up that he loomed above other men.

Mr. Lincoln's head was long, and tall from the base of the brain and from the eyebrows. His head ran backwards, his forehead rising as it ran back at a low angle, like Clay's, and unlike Webster's, which was almost perpendicular. The size of his hat measured at the hatter's block was seven and one-eighth, his head being, from ear to ear, six and one-half inches, and from the front to the back of the brain eight inches. Thus measured it was not below the medium size. His forehead was narrow but high; his hair was dark, almost black, and lay floating where his fingers or the winds left it, piled up at random. His cheek-bones were high, sharp, and prominent; his jaws were long and upcurved; his nose was large, long, blunt, and a little awry towards the right eye; his chin was sharp and upcurved; his eyebrows cropped out like a huge rock on the brow of a hill; his long, sallow face was wrinkled and dry, with a hair here and there on the surface; his cheeks were leathery; his ears were large, and ran out almost at right angles from his head, caused partly by heavy hats and partly by nature; his lower lip was thick, hanging, and undercurved, while his chin reached for the lip upcurved; his neck was neat and trim, his head being well balanced on it; there was the lone mole on the right cheek, and Adam's apple on his throat.

Thus stood, walked, acted, and looked Abraham

Lincoln. He was not a pretty man by any means, nor was he an ugly one; he was a homely man, careless of his looks, plain-looking and plain-acting. He had no pomp, display, or dignity, so-called. He appeared simple in his carriage and bearing. He was a sad-looking man; his melancholy dripped from him as he walked. His apparent gloom impressed his friends,* and created sympathy for him—one means of his great success. He was

---

* Lincoln's melancholy never failed to impress any man who ever saw or knew him. The perpetual look of sadness was his most prominent feature. The cause of this peculiar condition was a matter of frequent discussion among his friends. John T. Stuart said it was due to his abnormal digestion. His liver failed to work properly—did not secret bile—and his bowels were equally as inactive. "I used to advise him to take blue-mass pills," related Stuart, "and he did take them before he went to Washington, and for five months while he was President, but when I came on to Congress he told me he had ceased using them because they made him cross." The reader can hardly realize the extent of this peculiar tendency to gloom. One of Lincoln's colleagues in the Legislature of Illinois is authority for the statement coming from Lincoln himself that this "mental depression became so intense at times he never dared carry a pocket-knife." Two things greatly intensified his characteristic sadness: one was the endless succession of troubles in his domestic life, which he had to bear in silence; and the other was unquestionably the knowledge of his own obscure and lowly origin. The recollection of these things burned a deep impress on his sensitive soul.

As to the cause of this morbid condition my idea has always been that it was occult, and could not be explained by any course of observation and reasoning. It was ingrained, and, being ingrained, could not be reduced to rule, or the cause arrayed. It was necessarily hereditary, but whether it came down from a long line of ancestors and far back, or was simply the reproduction of the saddened life of Nancy Hanks, cannot well be determined. At any rate it was part of his nature, and could no more be shaken off than he could part with his brains.

gloomy, abstracted, and joyous—rather humorous—by turns; but I do not think he knew what real joy was for many years.

Mr. Lincoln sometimes walked our streets cheerily, he was not always gloomy, and then it was that on meeting a friend he greeted him with plain "Howd'y?" clasping his hand in both of his own, and gave him a hearty soul-welcome. On a winter's morning he might be seen stalking towards the market-house, basket on arm, his old gray shawl wrapped around his neck, his little boy Willie or Tad running along at his heels asking a thousand boyish questions, which his father, in deep abstraction, neither heeded nor heard.* If a friend met or

---

* "I lived next door to the Lincoln for many years, knew the family well. Mr. Lincoln used to come to our house, his feet encased in a pair of loose slippers, and with an old, faded pair of trousers fastened with one suspender. He frequently came to our house for milk. Our rooms were low, and he said one day, 'Jim, you'll have to lift your loft a little higher; I can't straighten out under it very well.' To my wife, who was short of stature, he used to say that little people had some advantages: they required less 'wood and wool to make them comfortable.' In his yard Lincoln had but little shrubbery. He once planted some rose bushes, to which he called my attention, but soon neglected them altogether. He never planted any vines or fruit trees, seemed to have no fondness for such things. At one time, yielding to my suggestion, he undertook to keep a garden in the rear part of his yard, but one season's experience sufficed to cure him of all desire for another. He kept his own horse, fed and curried it when at home; he also fed and milked his own cow, and sawed his own wood. Mr. Lincoln and his wife agreed moderately well. Frequently Mrs. Lincoln's temper would get the better of her. If she became furious, as she often did, her husband tried to pay no attention to her. He would sometimes laugh at her, but generally he would pick up one of the children and walk off. I have heard her say that

passed him, and he awoke from his reverie, something would remind him of a story he had heard in Indiana, and tell it he would, and there was no alternative but to listen.

Thus, I repeat, stood and walked and talked this singular man. He was odd, but when that gray eye and that face and those features were lit up by the inward soul in fires of emotion, then it was that all those apparently ugly features sprang into organs of beauty or disappeared in the sea of inspiration that often flooded his face. Sometimes it appeared as if Lincoln's soul was fresh from its Creator.

I have asked the friends and foes of Mr. Lincoln alike what they thought of his perceptions. One gentleman of unquestioned ability and free from all partiality or prejudice said, "Mr. Lincoln's perceptions were slow, a little perverted, if not somewhat distorted and diseased." If the meaning of this is that Mr. Lincoln saw things from a peculiar angle of his being, and from this was susceptible to nature's impulses, and that he so expressed himself, then I have no objection to what is said.

---

if Mr. Lincoln had remained at home more she could have loved him better. One day while Mr. Lincoln was absent—he had gone to Chicago to try a suit in the United States Court—his wife and I formed a conspiracy to take off the roof and raise his house. It was originally a frame structure one story and a half high. When Lincoln returned he met a gentleman on the sidewalk and, looking at his own house and manifesting great surprise, inquired: 'Stranger, can you tell me where Lincoln lives?' The gentleman gave him the necessary information, and Lincoln gravely entered his own premises."—Statement, James Gourly, February 9, 1866.

Otherwise I dissent. Mr. Lincoln's perceptions were slow, cold, clear, and exact. Everything came to him in its precise shape and color. To some men the world of matter and of man comes ornamented with beauty, life, and action; and hence more or less false and inexact. No lurking illusion or other error, false in itself and clad for the moment in robes of splendor, ever passed undetected or unchallenged over the threshold of his mind—that point which divides vision from the realm and home of thought. Names to him were nothing, and titles naught—assumption always standing back abashed at his cold, intellectual glare. Neither his perceptions nor intellectual vision were perverted, distorted, or diseased. He saw all things through a perfect mental lens. There was no diffraction or refraction there. He was not impulsive, fanciful, or imaginative; but cold, calm, and precise. He threw his whole mental light around the object, and, after a time, substance and quality stood apart, form and color took their appropriate places, and all was clear and exact in his mind. His fault, if any, was that he saw things less than they really were; less beautiful and more frigid. He crushed the unreal, the inexact, the hollow, and the sham. He saw things in rigidity rather than in vital action. He saw what no man could dispute, but he failed to see what might have been seen.

To some minds the world is all life, a soul beneath the material; but to Mr. Lincoln no life was individual that did not manifest itself to him. His

mind was his standard. His mental action was deliberate, and he was pitiless and persistent in pursuit of the truth. No error went undetected, no falsehood unexposed, if he once was aroused in search of the truth. The true peculiarity of Mr. Lincoln has not been seen by his various biographers; or, if seen, they have failed woefully to give it that importance which it deserves. Newton beheld the law of the universe in the fall of an apple from a tree to the ground; Owen saw the animal in its claw; Spencer saw evolution in the growth of a seed; and Shakespeare saw human nature in the laugh of a man. Nature was suggestive to all these men. Mr. Lincoln no less saw philosophy in a story and an object lesson in a joke. His was a new and original position, one which was always suggesting something to him. The world and man, principles and facts, all were full of suggestions to his susceptible soul. They continually put him in mind of something. His ideas were odd and original for the reason that he was a peculiar and original creation himself.

His power in the association of ideas was as great as his memory was tenacious and strong. His language indicated oddity and originality of vision as well as expression. Words and language are but the counterparts of the idea—the other half of the idea; they are but the stinging, hot, leaden bullets that drop from the mould; in a rifle, with powder stuffed behind them and fire applied, they are an embodied force resistlessly pursuing their object. In the search for words Mr. Lincoln was often at a

loss. He was often perplexed to give proper expression to his ideas; first, because he was not master of the English language; and secondly, because there were, in the vast store of words, so few that contained the exact coloring, power, and shape of his ideas. This will account for the frequent resort by him to the use of stories, maxims, and jokes in which to clothe his ideas, that they might be comprehended. So true was this perculiar mental vision of his that, though mankind has been gathering, arranging, and classifying facts for thousands of years, Lincoln's peculiar standpoint could give him no advantage over other men's labor. Hence he tore down to their deepest foundations all arrangements of facts, and constructed new ones to govern himself. He was compelled from his peculiar mental organization to do this. His labor was great and continuous.

The truth about Mr. Lincoln is that he read less and thought more than any man in his sphere in America. No man can put his finger on any great book written in the last or present century that he read thoroughly. When young he read the Bible, and when of age he read Shakespeare; but, though he often quoted from both, he never read either one through. He is acknowledged now to have been a great man, but the question is what made him great. I repeat, that he read less and thought more than any man of his standing in America, if not in the world. He possessed originality and power of thought in an eminent degree. Besides his well established reputation for caution, he was

concentrated in his thoughts and had great continuity of reflection. In everything he was patient and enduring. These are some of the grounds of his wonderful success.

Not only were nature, man, and principle suggestive to Mr. Lincoln, not only had he accurate and exact perceptions, but he was causative; his mind, apparently with an automatic movement, ran back behind facts, principles, and all things to their origin and first cause—to that point where forces act at once as effect and cause. He would stop in the street and analyze a machine. He would whittle a thing to a point, and then count the numberless inclined planes and their pitch making the point. Mastering and defining this, he would then cut that point back and get a broad transverse section of his pine-stick, and peel and define that. Clocks, omnibuses, language, paddle-wheels, and idioms never escaped his observation and analysis. Before he could form an idea of anything, before he would express his opinion on a subject, he must know its origin and history in substance and quality, in magnitude and gravity. He must know it inside and outside, upside and downside. He searched and comprehended his own mind and nature thoroughly, as I have often heard him say. He must analyze a sensation, an idea, and run back in its history to its origin, and purpose. He was remorseless in his analysis of facts and principles. When all these exhaustive processes had been gone through with he could form an idea and

express it; but no sooner. He had no faith, and no respect for "say so's," come though they might from tradition or authority. Thus everything had to run through the crucible, and be tested by the fires of his analytic mind; and when at last he did speak, his utterances rang out with the clear and keen ring of gold upon the counters of the understanding. He reasoned logically through analogy and comparison. All opponents dreaded his originality of idea, his condensation, defintion, and force of expression; and woe be to the man who hugged to his bosom a secret error if Lincoln got on the chase of it. I repeat, woe to him! Time could hide the error in no nook or corner of space in which he would not detect and expose it.

Though gifted with accurate and acute perception, though a profound thinker as well as analyzer, still Lincoln's judgment on many and minor matters was oftentimes childish. By the word judgment I do not mean what mental philosophers would call the exercise of reason, will—understanding; but I use the term in its popular sense. I refer to that capacity or power which decides on the fitness, the harmony, or, if you will, the beauty and appropriateness of things. I have always thought, and sometimes said, Lincoln lacked this quality in his mental structure. He was on the alert if a principle was involved or a man's rights at stake in a transaction; but he never could see the harm in wearing a sack-coat instead of a swallow-tail to an evening party, nor could he realize the

offense of telling a vulgar yarn if a preacher happened to be present.*

As already expressed, Mr. Lincoln had no faith. In order to believe, he must see and feel, and thrust his hand into the place. He must taste, smell, and handle before he had faith or even belief. Such a mind manifestly must have its time. His forte and power lay in digging out for himself and securing for his mind its own food, to be assimilated unto itself. Thus, in time he would form opinions and conclusions that no human power could overthrow. They were as irresistible as the rush of a flood; as convincing as logic embodied in mathematics. And yet the question arises: "Had Mr. Lincoln great, good common-sense?" A variety of opinions suggest themselves in answer to this. If the true test

---

* Sometime in 1857 a lady reader or elocutionist came to Springfield and gave a public reading in a hall immediately north of the State House. As lady lecturers were then rare birds, a very large crowd greeted her. Among other things she recited "Nothing to Wear," a piece in which is described the perplexities that beset "Miss Flora McFlimsey" in her efforts to appear fashionable. In the midst of one stanza, in which no effort is made to say anything particularly amusing, and during the reading of which the audience manifested the most respectful silence and attention, some one in the rear seats burst out into a loud, coarse laugh—a sudden and explosive guffaw. It startled the speaker and audience, and kindled a storm of unsuppressed laughter and applause. Everyone looked back to ascertain the cause of the demonstration, and was greatly surprised to find that it was Mr. Lincoln. He blushed and squirmed with the awkward diffidence of a schoolboy. What prompted him to laugh no one was able to explain. He was doubtless wrapped up in a brown study, and, recalling some amusing episode, indulged in laughter without realizing his surroundings. The experience mortified him greatly.

is that a man shall judge the rush and whirl of human actions and transactions as wisely and accurately as though indefinite time and proper conditions were at his disposal, then I am compelled to follow the logic of things and admit that he had no great stock of common sense; but if, on the other hand, the time and conditions were ripe, his common-sense was in every case equal to the emergency. He knew himself, and never trusted his dollar or his fame in casual opinions—never acted hastily or prematurely on great matters.

Mr. Lincoln believed that the great leading law of human nature is motive. He reasoned all ideas of a disinterested action out of my mind. I used to hold that an action could be pure, disinterested, and wholly free from selfishness; but he divested me of that delusion. His idea was that all human actions were caused by motives, and that at the bottom of these motives was self. He defied me to act without motive and unselfishly; and when I did the act and told him of it, he analyzed and sifted it to the last grain. After he had concluded, I could not avoid the admission that he had demonstrated the absolute selfishness of the entire act. Although a profound analyzer of the laws of human nature he could form no just construction of the motives of the particular individual. He knew but little of the play of the features as seen in the "human face divine." He could not distinguish between the paleness of anger and the crimson tint of modesty. In determining what each play of the features indicated he was pitiably weak.

The great predominating elements of Mr. Lincoln's peculiar character were: first, his great capacity and power of reason; second, his conscience and his excellent understanding; third, an exalted idea of the sense of right and equity; fourth, his intense veneration of the true and the good. His conscience, his heart and all the faculties and qualities of his mind bowed submissively to the despotism of his reason. He lived and acted from the standard of reason—that throne of logic, home of principle—the realm of Deity in man. It is from this point Mr. Lincoln must be viewed. Not only was he cautious, patient, and enduring; not only had he concentration and great continuity of thought; but he had profound analytical power. His vision was clear, and he was emphatically the master of statement. His pursuit of the truth, as before mentioned, was indefatigable. He reasoned from well-chosen principles with such clearness, force, and directness that the tallest intellects in the land bowed to him. He was the strongest man I ever saw, looking at him from the elevated standpoint of reason and logic. He came down from that height with irresistible and crashing force. His Cooper Institute and other printed speeches will prove this; but his speeches before the courts —especially the Supreme Court of Illinois—if they had been preserved, would demonstrate it still more plainly. Here he demanded time to think and prepare. The office of reason is to determine the truth. Truth is the power of reason, and Lincoln loved truth for its own sake. It was to him reason's food.

Conscience, the second great quality of Mr. Lincoln's character, is that faculty which induces in us love of the just. Its real office is justice; right and equity are its correlatives. As a court, it is in session continuously; it decides all acts at all times. Mr. Lincoln had a deep, broad, living conscience. His reason, however, was the real judge; it told him what was true or false, and therefore good or bad, right or wrong, just or unjust, and his conscience echoed back the decision. His conscience ruled his heart; he was always just before he was generous. It cannot be said of any mortal that he was always absolutely just. Neither was Lincoln always just; but his general life was. It follows that if Mr. Lincoln had great reason and great conscience he must have been an honest man; and so he was. He was rightfully entitled to the appellation "Honest Abe." Honesty was his polar star.

Mr. Lincoln also had a good understanding; that is, the faculty that comprehends the exact state of things and determines their relations, near or remote. The understanding does not necessarily enquire for the reason of things. While Lincoln was odd and original, while he lived out of himself and by himself, and while he could absorb but little from others, yet a reading of his speeches, messages, and letters satisfies us that he had good understanding. But the strongest point in his make-up was the knowledge he had of himself; he comprehended and understood his own capacity—what he did and why he did it—better perhaps than any man of his day. He had a wider and deeper comprehension of his

environments, of the political conditions especially. than men who were more learned or had had the benefits of a more thorough training.

He was a very sensitive man,—modest to the point of diffidence,—and often hid himself in the masses to prevent the discovery of his identity. He was not indifferent, however, to approbation and public opinion. He had no disgusting egotism and no pompous pride, no aristocracy, no haughtiness, no vanity. Merging together the qualities of his nature he was a meek, quiet, unobtrusive gentleman.

As many contradictory opinions prevail in reference to Mr. Lincoln's heart and humanity as on the question of his judgment. As many persons perhaps contend that he was cold and obdurate as that he was warm and affectionate. The first thing the world met in contact with him was his head and conscience; after that he exposed the tender side of his nature—his heart, subject at all times to his exalted sense of right and equity, namely his conscience. In proportion as he held his conscience subject to his head, he held his heart subject to his head and conscience. His humanity had to defer to his sense of justice and the eternal right. His heart was the lowest of these organs, if we may call them such—the weakest of the three. Some men have reversed this order and characterized his heart as his ruling organ. This estimate of Mr. Lincoln endows him with love regardless of truth, justice, and right. The question still is, was Lincoln cold and heartless, or warm and affectionate? Can a

man be all heart, all head, and all conscience? Some of these are masters over the others, some will be dominant, ruling with imperial sway, and thus giving character to the man. What, in the first place, do we mean by a warm-hearted man? Is it one who goes out of himself and reaches for others spontaneously, seeking to correct some abuse to mankind because of a deep love for humanity, apart from equity and truth, and who does what he does for love's sake? If so, Mr. Lincoln was a cold man. If a man, woman, or child approached him, and the prayer of such an one was granted, that itself was not evidence of his love. The African was enslaved and deprived of this rights; a principle was violated in doing so. Rights imply obligations as well as duties. Mr. Lincoln was President; he was in a position that made it his duty, through his sense of right, his love of principle, the constitutional obligations imposed upon him by the oath of office, to strike the blow against slavery. But did he do it for love? He has himself answered the question: "I would not free the slaves if I could preserve the Union without it." When he freed the slaves there was no heart in the act. This argument can be used against his too enthusiastic friends.

In general terms his life was cold—at least characterized by what many persons would deem great indifference. He had, however, a strong latent capacity to love: but the object must first come in the guise of a principle, next it must be right and true—then it was lovely in his sight. He loved humanity when it was oppressed—an abstract love

as against the concrete love centered in an individual. He rarely used terms of endearment, and yet he was proverbially tender and gentle. He gave the key-note to his own character when he said: "With malice towards none, with charity for all." In proportion to his want of deep, intense love he had no hate and bore no malice. His charity for an imperfect man was as broad as his devotion to principle was enduring.

"But was not Mr. Lincoln a man of great humanity?" asks a friend at my elbow; to which I reply, "Has not that question been answered already?" Let us suppose it has not. We must understand each other. What is meant by his humanity? Is it meant that he had much of human nature in him? If so, I grant that he was a man of humanity. If, in the event of the above definition being unsatisfactory or untrue, it is meant that he was tender and kind, then I again agree. But if the inference is that he would sacrifice truth or right in the slightest degree for the love of a friend, then he was neither tender nor kind; nor did he have any humanity. The law of human nature is such that it cannot be all head, all conscience, and all heart in one person at the same time. Our maker so constituted things that, where God through reason blazed the way, we might boldly walk therein. The glory of Mr. Lincoln's power lay in the just and magnificent equipoise of head, conscience, and heart; and here his fame must rest or not at all.

Not only were Mr. Lincoln's perceptions good; not only was nature suggestive to him; not only

was he original and strong; not only had he great reason, good understanding; not only did he love the true and the good—the eternal right; not only was he tender and sympathetic and kind;—but, in due proportion and in legitimate subordination, he had a glorious combination of them all. Through his perceptions—the suggestiveness of nature, his originality and strength; through his magnificent reason, his understanding, his conscience, his tenderness, quick sympathy, his heart; he approximated as nearly as human nature and the imperfections of man would permit to an embodiment of the great moral principle, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you."

Of Mr. Lincoln's will-power there are two opinions also: one that he lacked any will; the other that he was all will. Both these contradictory views have their vehement and honest champions. For the great underlying principles of mind in man he had great respect. He loved the true first, the right second, and the good last. His mind struggled for truth, and his soul reached out for substances. He cared not for forms, ways, methods—the non-substantial things of this world. He could not, by reason of his structure and mental organization, care anything about them. He did not have an intense care for any particular or individual man—the dollar, property, rank, orders, manners, or similar things; neither did he have any avarice or other like vice in his nature. He detested somewhat all technical rules in law, philosophy, and other sciences —mere forms everywhere—because they were, as a

general thing, founded on arbitrary thoughts and ideas, and not on reason, truth, and the right. These things seemed to him lacking in substance, and he disregarded them because they cramped the originality of his genius. What suited a little narrow, critical mind did not suit Mr. Lincoln any more than a child's clothes would fit his father's body. Generally he took no interest in town affairs or local elections; he attended no meetings that pertained to local interests. He did not care—because by reason of his nature he could not—who succeeded to the presidency of this or that society or railroad company; who made the most money; who was going to Philadelphia, and what were the costs of such a trip; who was going to be married; who among his friends got this office or that—who was elected street commissioner or health inspector. No principle of truth, right, or justice being involved in any of these things he could not be moved by them.* He could not understand why men struggled so desperately for the little glory or lesser salary the small offices afforded. He made

* A bitter, malignant fool who always had opposed Lincoln and his friends, and had lost no opportunity to abuse them, induced Lincoln to go to the Governor of Illinois and recommend him for an important office in the State Militia. There being no principle at stake Lincoln could not refuse the request. When his friends heard of it they were furious in their denunciation of his action. It mortified him greatly to learn that he had displeased them. "And yet," he said, a few days later, dwelling on the matter to me in the office, "I couldn't well refuse the little the fellow asked of me. Sometimes I feel," he added, dryly, "that it's a good thing I wasn't born a woman."

this remark to me one day in Washington: "If ever this free people—this Government—is utterly demoralized, it will come from this human struggle for office—a way to live without work." It puzzled him a good deal, he said, to get at the root of this dreaded disease, which spread like contagion during the nation's death struggle.

Because he could not feel a deep interest in the things referred to, nor manifest the same interest in those who were engaged in the popular scramble, he was called indifferent—nay, ungrateful—to his friends. This estimate of the man was a vary unjust as well as unfair one. Mr. Lincoln loved his friends with commendable loyalty; in many cases he clung to them tenaciously, like iron to iron welded; and yet, because he could not be actively aroused, nor enter into the spirit of their anxiety for office, he was called ungrateful. But he was not so. He may have seemed passive and lacking in interest; he may not have measured his friendly duties by the applicant's hot desire; but yet he was never ungrateful. Neither was he a selfish man. He would never have performed an act, even to promote himself to the Presidency, if by that act any human being was wronged. If it is said that he preferred Abraham Lincoln to anyone else in the pursuit of his ambition, and that because of this he was a selfish man, then I can see no impropriety in the charge. Under the same conditions we should all be equally guilty.

Remembering that Mr. Lincoln's mind moved logically, slowly, and cautiously, the question of his

will and its power is easily solved. Although he cared but little for simple facts, rules, and methods, he did care for the truth and right of principle. In debate he courteously granted all the forms and non-essential things to his opponent. Sometimes he yielded nine points out of ten. The nine he brushed aside as husks or rubbish; but the tenth, being a question of substance, he clung to with all his might. On the underlying principles of truth and justice his will was as firm as steel and as tenacious as iron. It was as solid, real, and vital as an idea on which the world turns. He scorned to support or adopt an untrue position, in proportion as his conscience prevented him from doing an unjust thing. Ask him to sacrifice in the slightest degree his convictions of truth *—as he was asked to do when he made his "house-divided-against-itself speech"—and his soul would have exclaimed with indignant scorn, "The world perish first!"

Such was Lincoln's will. Because on one line of questions—the non-essential—he was pliable, and on the other he was as immovable as the rocks, have arisen the contradictory notions prevalent regarding him. It only remains to say that he was inflexible and unbending in human transactions when it was

* "Again, Mr. Lincoln seems to me too true and honest a man to have his eulogy written, and I have no taste for writing eulogies. I am sure that, if he were alive, he would feel that the exact truth regarding himself was far more worthy of himself and of his biographer than any flattering picture. I loved the man as he was, with his rugged features, his coarse, rebellious hair, his sad, dreamy eyes; and I love to see him, and I hope to describe him, as he was, and not otherwise."—Robert Dale Owen, January 22, 1867, MS.

necessary to be so, and not otherwise. At one moment he was pliable and expansive as gentle air; at the next as tenacious and unyielding as gravity itself.

Thus I have traced Mr. Lincoln through his perceptions, his suggestiveness, his judgment, and his four predominant qualities: power of reason, understanding, conscience, and heart. In the grand review of his peculiar characteristics, nothing creates such an impressive effect as his love of the truth. It looms up over everything else. His life is proof of the assertion that he never yielded in his fundamental conception of truth to any man for any end.

All the follies and wrong Mr. Lincoln ever fell into or committed sprang out of these weak points: the want of intuitive judgment; the lack of quick, sagacious knowledge of the play and meaning of men's features as written on the face; the want of the sense of propriety of things; his tenderness and mercy; and lastly, his unsuspecting nature. He was deeply and sincerely honest himself, and assumed that others were so. He never suspected men; and hence in dealing with them he was easily imposed upon.

All the wise and good things Mr. Lincoln ever did sprang out of his great reason, his conscience, his understanding, his heart, his love of the truth, the right, and the good. I am speaking now of his particular and individual faculties and qualities, not of their combination or the result of any combinations. Run out these qualities and faculties abstractly, and see what they produce. For instance, a tender heart, a strong reason, a broad under-

standing, an exalted conscience, a love of the true and the good must, proportioned reasonably and applied practically, produce a man of great power and great humanity.

As illustrative of a combination in Mr. Lincoln's organization, it may be said that his eloquence lay in the strength of his logical faculty, his supreme power of reasoning, his great understanding, and his love of principle; in his clear and accurate vision; in his cool and masterly statement of principles around which the issues gather; and in the statement of those issues and the grouping of the facts that are to carry conviction to the minds of men of every grade of intelligence. He was so clear that he could not be misunderstood or long misrepresented. He stood square and bolt upright to his convictions, and anyone who listened to him would be convinced that he formed his thoughts and utterances by them. His mind was not exactly a wide, broad, generalizing, and comprehensive mind, nor yet a versatile, quick, and subtle one, bounding here and there as emergencies demanded; but it was deep, enduring, strong, like a majestic machine running in deep iron grooves with heavy flanges on its wheels.

Mr. Lincoln himself was a very sensitive man, and hence, in dealing with others, he avoided wounding their hearts or puncturing their sensibility. He was unusually considerate of the feelings of other men, regardless of their rank, condition, or station. At first sight he struck one with his plainness, simplicity of manner, sincerity, candor, and truthfulness. He had no double interests and no overwhelming

dignity with which to chill the air around his visitor. He was always easy of approach and thoroughly democratic. He seemed to throw a charm around every man who ever met him. To be in his presence was a pleasure, and no man ever left his company with injured feelings unless most richly deserved.

The universal testimony, "He is an honest man," gave him a firm hold on the masses, and they trusted him with a blind religious faith. His sad, melancholy face excited their sympathy, and when the dark days came it was their heart-strings that entwined and sustained him. Sympathy, we are told, is one of the strongest and noblest incentives to human action. With the sympathy and love of the people to sustain him, Lincoln had unlimited power over them; he threw an invisible and weightless harness over them, and drove them through disaster and desperation to final victory. The trust and worship by the people of Lincoln were the result of his simple character. He held himself not aloof from the masses. He became one of them. They feared together, they struggled together, they hoped together; thus melted and moulded into one, they became one in thought, one in will, one in action. If Lincoln cautiously awaited the full development of the last fact in the great drama before he acted, when longer waiting would be a crime, he knew that the people were determinedly at his back. Thus, when a blow was struck, it came with the unerring aim and power of a bolt from heaven. A natural king—not ruling men, but lead-

ing them along the drifts and trends of their own tendencies, always keeping in mind the consent of the governed, he developed what the future historian will call the sublimest order of conservative statesmanship.

Whatever of life, vigor, force, and power of eloquence his peculiar qualities gave him; whatever there was in a fair, manly, honest, and impartial administration of justice under law to all men at all times; whatever there was in a strong will in the right governed by tenderness and mercy; whatever there was in toil and sublime patience; whatever there was in these things or a wise combination of them, Lincoln is justly entitled to in making up the impartial verdict of history. These limit and define him as a statesman, as an orator, as an executive of the nation, and as a man. They developed in all the walks of his life; they were his law; they were his nature, they were Abraham Lincoln.

This long, bony, sad man floated down the Sangamon river in a frail canoe in the spring of 1831. Like a piece of driftwood he lodged at last, without a history, strange, penniless, and alone. In sight of the capital of Illinois, in the fatigue of daily toil he struggled for the necessaries of life. Thirty years later this same peculiar man left the Sangamon river, backed by friends, by power, by the patriotic prayers of millions of people, to be the ruler of the greatest nation in the world.

As the leader of a brave people in their desperate struggle for national existence, Abraham Lincoln will always be an interesting historical character.

His strong, honest, sagacious, and noble life will always possess a peculiar charm. Had it not been for his conservative statesmanship, his supreme confidence in the wisdom of the people, his extreme care in groping his way among facts and before ideas, this nation might have been two governments to-day. The low and feeble circulation of his blood; his healthful irritability, which responded so slowly to the effects of stimuli; the strength of his herculean frame; his peculiar organism, conserving its force; his sublime patience; his wonderful endurance; his great hand and heart, saved this country from division, when division meant its irreparable ruin.

The central figure of our national history, the sublime type of our civilization, posterity, with the record of his career and actions before it, will decree that, whether Providence so ordained it or not, Abraham Lincoln was the man for the hour.

THE END.

APPENDIX

UNPUBLISHED FAMILY LETTERS.

THE following letters by Mr. Lincoln to his relatives were at one time placed in my hands. As they have never before been published entire I have thought proper to append them here. They are only interesting as showing Mr. Lincoln's affection for his father and step-mother, and as specimens of the good, sound sense with which he approached every undertaking. The list opens with a letter to his father written from Washington while a member of Congress:

"WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, 1848.

"*My Dear Father:*

"Your letter of the 7th was received night before last. I very cheerfully send you the twenty dollars, which sum you say is necessary to save your land from sale. It is singular that you should have forgotten a judgment against you—and it is more singular that the plaintiff should have let you forget it so long, particularly as I suppose you have always had property enough to satisfy a judgment of that amount. Before you pay it, it would be well to be sure you have not paid, or at least that you cannot prove you have paid it.

"Give my love to Mother and all the Connections.

"Affectionately, your son,

"A. LINCOLN."

His step-brother, John D. Johnston, for whom Mr. Lincoln always exhibited the affection of a real brother, was the recipient of many letters. Some of them were commonplace, but

between the lines of each much good, homely philosophy may be read. Johnston, whom I knew, was exactly what his distinguished step-brother charged—an idler. In every emergency he seemed to fall back on Lincoln for assistance. The aid generally came, but with it always some plain but sensible suggestion. The series opens as follows:

"SPRINGFIELD, Feb. 23, 1850.

"*Dear Brother:*

"Your letter about a mail contract was received yesterday. I have made out a bid for you at $120, guaranteed it myself, got our P. M. here to certify it, and send it on. Your former letter, concerning some man's claim for a pension, was also received. I had the claim examined by those who are practised in such matters, and they decide he cannot get a pension.

"As you make no mention of it, I suppose you had not learned that we lost our little boy. He was sick fifteen days, and died in the morning of the first day of this month. It was not our *first*, but our second child. We miss him very much.

"Your Brother, in haste,

"A. LINCOLN."

"TO JOHN D. JOHNSTON."

Following is another, which, however, bears no date:

"*Dear Johnston:*

"Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, 'We can get along very well now,' but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not *lazy*, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; and it is vastly important to you, and still

more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit, before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

"You are in need of some ready money, and what I propose is that you shall go to work 'tooth and nail' for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get,—and to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of next May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and, what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But if I should now clear you out, next year you would be just as deep in as ever. You say you would give your place in heaven for $70 or $80. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work.

"You say, if I will furnish you the money, you will deed me the land, and if you don't pay the money back you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eight times eighty dollars to you.

"Affectionately,

"Your brother,

"A. LINCOLN."

The following, written when the limit of Thomas Lincoln's life seemed rapidly approaching, shows in what esteem his son held the relation that existed between them:

"SPRINGFIELD, Jan'y. 12, 1851.

"*Dear Brother:*

"On the day before yesterday I received a letter from Harriett, written at Greenup. She says she has just returned from your house; and that Father is very low, and will hardly recover. She also says that you have written me two letters; and that although you do not expect me to come now, you wonder that I do not write. I received both your letters, and although I have not answered them, it is not because I have forgotten them, or [not] been interested about them, but because it appeared to me I could write nothing which could do any good. You already know I desire that neither Father or Mother shall be in want of any comfort either in health or sickness while they live; and I feel sure you have not failed to use my name, if necessary, to procure a doctor, or anything else for Father in his present sickness. My business is such that I could hardly leave home now, if it were not, as it is, that my own wife is sick a-bed (it is a case of baby-sickness, and I suppose is not dangerous). I sincerely hope Father may yet recover his health; but at all events tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great, and good, and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads; and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that if we could meet now it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleasant; but that if it be his lot to go now he will soon have a joyous meeting with many loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join them.

'Write me again when you receive this.

"Affectionately,

"A. LINCOLN."

Lincoln's mentor-like interest in his step-mother and his shiftless and almost unfortunate step-brother was in no wise diminished by the death of his father. He writes:

"SPRINGFIELD, Aug. 31, 1851.

"*Dear Brother:*

"Inclosed is the deed for the land. We are all well, and have nothing in the way of news. We have had no cholera here for about two weeks.

"Give my love to all, and especially to Mother.

"Yours as ever,

"A. LINCOLN."

No more practical or kindly-earnest advice could have been given than this:

"SHELBYVILLE, Nov. 4, 1851.

"*Dear Brother:*

"When I came into Charleston day before yesterday I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live, and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since, and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year, and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money and spend it. Part with the land you have, and, my life upon it, you will never after own a spot big enough to bury you in. Half you will get for the land you spend in moving to Missouri, and the other half you will eat and drink and wear out, and no foot of land will be bought. Now I feel it is my duty to have no hand in such a piece of foolery. I feel that it is so even on your own account, and particularly on *Mother's* account. The eastern forty acres I intend to keep for Mother while she lives;

if you *will not cultivate it*, it will rent for enough to support her; at least it will rent for something. Her dower in the other two forties she can let you have, and no thanks to me.

"Now do not misunderstand this letter. I do not write it in any unkindness. I write it in order, if possible, to get you to *face* the truth, which truth is, you are destitute because you have idled away all your time. Your thousand pretences for not getting along better are all nonsense; they deceive nobody but yourself. *Go to work* is the only cure for your case.

"A word for Mother: Chapman tells me he wants you to go and live with him. If I were you I would try it awhile. If you get tired of it (as I think you will not) you can return to your own home. Chapman feels very kindly to you; and I have no doubt he will make your situation very pleasant.

"Sincerely your son,

"A. LINCOLN."

The list closes with this one written by Lincoln while on the circuit:

"SHELBYVILLE, Nov. 9, 1851.

"*Dear Brother:*

"When I wrote you before, I had not received your letter. I still think as I did; but if the land can be sold so that I get three hundred dollars to put to interest for Mother, I will not object if she does not. But before I will make a deed, the money must be had, or secured beyond all doubt at ten per cent.

"As to Abraham, I do not want him *on my own account;* but I understand he wants to live with me so that he can go to school and get a fair start in the world, which I very much wish him to have. When I reach home, if I can make it convenient to take, I will take him, provided there is no mistake between us as to the object and terms of my taking him.

"In haste, as ever,

"A. LINCOLN."

AN INCIDENT ON THE CIRCUIT.

"In the spring term of the Tazewell County Court in 1847, which at that time was held in the village of Tremont, I was detained as a witness an entire week. Lincoln was employed in several suits, and among them was one of Case *vs.* Snow Bros. The Snow Bros., as appeared in evidence (who were both minors), had purchased from an old Mr. Case what was then called a "prairie team," consisting of two or three yoke of oxen and prairie plow, giving therefor their joint note for some two hundred dollars; but when pay-day came refused to pay, pleading the minor act. The note was placed in Lincoln's hands for collection. The suit was called and a jury impanelled. The Snow Bros. did not deny the note, but pleaded through their counsel that they were minors, and that Mr. Case knew they were at the time of the contract and conveyance. All this was admitted by Mr. Lincoln, with his peculiar phrase, 'Yes, gentlemen, I reckon that's so.' The minor act was read and its validity admitted in the same manner. The counsel of the defendants were permitted without question to state all these things to the jury, and to show by the statute that these minors could not be held responsible for their contract. By this time you may well suppose that I began to be uneasy. 'What!' thought I, 'this good old man, who confided in these boys, to be wronged in this way, and even his counsel, Mr. Lincoln, to submit in silence!' I looked at the court, Judge Treat, but could read nothing in his calm and dignified demeanor. Just then, Mr. Lincoln slowly got up, and in his strange, half-erect attitude and clear, quiet accent began: '*Gentlemen of the Jury*, are you willing to allow these boys to begin life with this shame and disgrace attached to their character? If you are, *I* am not. The best judge of human character that ever wrote has left these immortal words for all of us to ponder:

"Good name in man or woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him
And makes me poor indeed." '

"Then rising to his full height, and looking upon the defendants with the compassion of a brother, his long right arm extended toward the opposing counsel, he continued: 'Gentlemen of the jury, these poor innocent boys would never have attempted this low villany had it not been for the advice of these lawyers.' Then for a few minutes he showed how even the noble science of law may be prostituted. With a scathing rebuke to those who thus belittle their profession, he concluded: 'And now, gentlemen, you have it in *your* power to set these boys right before the world.' He plead for the young men only; I think he did not mention his client's name. The jury, without leaving their seats, decided that the defendants must pay the debt; and the latter, after hearing Lincoln, were as willing to pay it as the jury were determined they should. I think the entire argument lasted not above five minutes."—*George W. Minier*, statement, Apr. 10, 1882.

LINCOLN'S FELLOW LAWYERS.

Among Lincoln's colleagues at the Springfield bar, after his re-entry into politics in 1854, and until his elevation to the Presidency, were, John T. Stuart, Stephen T. Logan, John A. McClernand, Benjamin S. Edwards, David Logan, E. B. Herndon, W. J. Ferguson, James H. Matheney, C. C. Brown, N. M. Broadwell, Charles W. Keyes, John E. Rosette, S. T. Zane, J. C. Conkling, Shelby M. Cullom, and G. M. Shutt. There were others, notably John M. Palmer and Richard J. Oglesby, who came in occasionally from other counties and tried suits with and against us, but they never became members of our bar, strictly speaking, till after the war had closed.—W. H. H.

THE TRUCE WITH DOUGLAS.—TESTIMONY OF IRWIN.

"The conversation took place in the office of Lincoln & Herndon, in the presence of P. L. Harrison, William H. Herndon, Pascal Enos, and myself. It originated in this way: After the debate at Springfield on the 4th and 5th of October, 1854, William Jayne, John Cassiday, Pascal Enos, the writer, and others whose names I do not now remember, filled out and signed a written request to Lincoln to follow Douglas until he 'ran him into his hole' or made him halloo 'Enough,' and that day Lincoln was giving in his report. He said that the next morning after the Peoria debate Douglas came to him and flattered him that he knew more on the question of Territorial organization in this government than all the Senate of the United States, and called his mind to the trouble the latter had given him. He added that Lincoln had already given him more trouble than all the opposition in the Senate, and then proposed to Lincoln that if he (Lincoln) would go home and not follow him, he (Douglas) would go to no more of his appointments, would make no more speeches, and would go home and remain silent during the rest of the campaign. Lincoln did not make another speech till after the election."—*B. F. Irwin*, statement, Feb. 8, 1866, unpublished MS.

See *ante*, pp. 368-369.

THE BLOOMINGTON CONVENTION.

Following is a copy of the call to select delegates to the Bloomington Convention held May 29, 1856, when the Republican party in Illinois came into existence. It will be remembered that I signed Lincoln's name under instructions from him by telegraph. The original document I gave several years ago to a friend in Boston, Mass.:

"We, the undersigned, citizens of Sangamon County, who are opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the present administration, and who are in favor of restoring to the general government the policy of Washington and Jefferson, would suggest the propriety of a County Convention, to be held in the city of Springfield on Saturday, the 24th day of May, at 2 o'clock, P. M., to appoint delegates to the Bloomington Convention.

"A. LINCOLN,
"W. H. HERNDON and others."

The decided stand Lincoln took in this instance, and his speech in the Convention, undoubtedly paved the way for his leadership in the Republican party.—W. H. H.

AN OFFICE DISCUSSION—LINCOLN'S IDEA OF WAR.

One morning in 1859, Lincoln and I, impressed with the probability of war between the two sections of the country, were discussing the subject in the office. "The position taken by the advocates of State Sovereignty," remarked Lincoln, "always reminds me of the fellow who contended that the proper place for the big kettle was inside of the little one." To me, war seemed inevitable, but when I came to view the matter squarely, I feared a difficulty the North would have in controlling the various classes of people and shades of sentiment, so as to make them an effective force in case of war: I feared the lack of some great head and heart to lead us onward. Lincoln had great confidence in the masses, believing that, when they were brought face to face with the reality of the conflict, all differences would disappear, and that they would be merged into one. To illustrate his idea he made use of this figure: "Go to the river bank with a coarse sieve and fill it with gravel. After a vigorous shaking you will observe that the small pebbles and sand have sunk from view and fallen to the ground. The next larger in size, unable to slip between

the wires, will still be found within the sieve. By thorough and repeated shakings you will find that, of the pebbles still left in the sieve, the largest ones will have risen to the top. Now," he continued, "if, as you say, war is inevitable and will shake the country from centre to circumference, you will find that the little men will fall out of view in the shaking. The masses will rest on some solid foundation, and the big men will have climbed to the top. Of these latter, one greater than all the rest will leap forth armed and equipped—the people's leader in the conflict." Little did I realize the strength of the masses when united and fighting for a common purpose; and much less did I dream that the great leader soon to be tried was at that very moment touching my elbow!—W. H. H.

LINCOLN AND THE KNOW-NOTHINGS.

Among other things used against Lincoln in the campaign of 1860 was the charge that he had been a member of a Know-Nothing lodge. When the charge was laid at his door he wrote the following letter to one of his confidential political friends. I copy from the original MS.:

[Confidential.]

"SPRINGFIELD, ILLS., July 21, 1860.

"HON. A. JONAS.

"My Dear Sir:

"Yours of the 20th is received. I suppose as good, or even better, men than I may have been in American or Know-Knothing lodges; but, in point of fact, I never was in one, at Quincy or elsewhere. I was never in Quincy but one day and two nights while Know-Nothing lodges were in existence, and you were with me that day and both those nights. I had never been there before in my life; and never afterwards, till the joint debate with Douglas in 1858. It was in 1854, when I spoke in some hall there, and after the speaking you,

with others, took me to an oyster saloon, passed an hour there, and you walked with me to, and parted with me at, the Quincy House quite late at night. I left by stage for Naples before daylight in the morning, having come in by the same route after dark the evening previous to the speaking, when I found you waiting at the Quincy House to meet me. A few days after I was there, Richardson, as I understood, started the same story about my having been in a Know-Nothing lodge. When I heard of the charge, as I did soon after, I taxed my recollection for some incident which could have suggested it; and I remembered that, on parting with you the last night, I went to the office of the Hotel to take my stage passage for the morning, was told that no stage office for that line was kept there, and that I must see the driver before retiring, to insure his calling for me in the morning; and a servant was sent with me to find the driver, who, after taking me a square or two, stopped me, and stepped perhaps a dozen steps farther, and in my hearing called to some one, who answered him, apparently from the upper part of a building, and promised to call with the stage for me at the Quincy House. I returned and went to bed, and before day the stage called and took me. This is all.

"That I never was in a Know-Nothing lodge in Quincy I should expect could be easily proved by respectable men who were always in the lodges, and never saw me there. An affidavit of one or two such would put the matter at rest.

"And now, a word of caution. Our adversaries think they can gain a point if they could force me to openly deny the charge, by which some degree of offence would be given to the Americans. For this reason it must not publicly appear that I am paying any attention to the charge,

"Yours truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

LINCOLN'S VIEWS ON THE RIGHTS OF SUFFRAGE.

At one time, while holding the office of attorney for the city of Springfield, I had a case in the Supreme Court, which involved the validity or constitutionality of a law regulating the matter of voting. Although a city case, it really abridged the right of suffrage. Being Lincoln's partner I wanted him to assist me in arguing the questions involved. He declined to do so, saying: "I am opposed to the limitation or lessening of the right of suffrage; if anything, I am in favor of its extension or enlargement. I want to lift men up—to broaden rather than contract their privileges."—W. H. H.

THE BURIAL OF THE ASSASSIN BOOTH.

"Upon reaching Washington with the body of Booth—having come up the Potomac—it was at once removed from the tug-boat to a gun-boat that lay at the dock at the Navy Yard, where it remained about thirty-six hours. It was there examined by the Sugeon-General and staff and other officers, and identified by half a score of persons who had known him well. Toward evening of the second day Gen. L. C. Baker, then chief of the 'Detective Bureau of the War Department,' received orders from Secretary of War Stanton to dispose of the body. Stanton said, 'Put it where it will not be disturbed until Gabriel blows his last trumpet.' I was ordered to assist him. The body was placed in a row-boat, and taking with us one trusty man to manage the boat, we quietly floated down the river. Crowds of people all along the shore were watching us. For a blind we took with us a heavy ball and chain, and it was soon going from lip to lip that we were about to sink the body in the Potomac. Darkness soon came on, completely concealing our movements, and under its cover we pulled slowly back to the old Penitentiary, which during the war was

used as an arsenal. The body was then lifted from the boat and carried through a door opening on the river front. Under the stone floor of what had been a prison cell a shallow grave was dug, and the body, with the United States blanket for a 'winding-sheet,' was there interred. There also it remained till Booth's accomplices were hanged. It was then taken up and buried with his companions in crime. I have since learned that the remains were again disinterred and given to his friends, and that they now rest in the family burial-place in Baltimore, Md."—*From MS. of L. B. Baker, late Lieut. and A. Q. M. 1st D. C. Cav.*

A TRIBUTE TO LINCOLN BY A COLLEAGUE AT THE BAR.

"The weird and melancholy association of eloquence and poetry had a strong fascination for Mr. Lincoln's mind. Tasteful composition, either of prose or poetry, which faithfully contrasted the realities of eternity with the unstable and fickle fortunes of time, made a strong impression on his mind. In the indulgence of this melancholy taste it is related of him that the poem, '*Immortality*,' he knew by rote and appreciated very highly. He had a strange liking for the verses, and they bear a just resemblance to his fortune. Mr. Lincoln, at the time of his assassination, was encircled by a halo of immortal glory such as had never before graced the brow of mortal man. He had driven treason from its capital city, had slept in the palace of its once proud and defiant, but now vanquished leader, and had saved his country and its accrued glories of three-quarters of a century from destruction. He rode, not with the haughty and imperious brow of an ancient conqueror, but with the placid complacency of a pure patriot, through the streets of the political Babylon of modern times. He had ridden over battle-fields immortal in history, when, in power at least, he was the leader. Having assured the misguided citizens of the South

that he meant them no harm beyond a determination to maintain the government, he returned buoyant with hope to the Executive Mansion where for four long years he had been held, as it were, a prisoner.

"Weary with the stories of state, he goes to seek the relaxation of amusement at the theatre; sees the gay crowd as he passes in; is cheered and graciously smiled upon by fair women and brave men; beholds the gorgeous paraphernalia of the stage, the brilliantly lighted scene, the arched ceiling, with its grotesque and inimitable figuring to heighten the effect and make the occasion one of unalloyed pleasure. The hearts of the people beat in unison with his over a redeemed and ransomed land. A pause in the play—a faint pistol shot is heard. No one knows its significance save the hellish few who are in the plot. A wild shriek, such as murder wrings from the heart of woman, follows: the proud form of Mr. Lincoln has sunk in death. The scene is changed to a wild confusion such as no poet can describe, no painter delineate. Well might the murdered have said and oft repeated:

> "Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
> From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
> From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud,—
> Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?' "

[*From a speech by Hon. Lawrence Weldon, at a bar-meeting held in the United States Court at Springfield, Ills., in June, 1865.*]

INDEX

ARMSTRONG, HANNAH—Applies to Lincoln to defend her son, 358–359.

Armstrong, Jack—Wrestles with Lincoln, 82–83.

BAKER, EDWARD D.—Speech in Springfield church, 192; finds a friend in Lincoln, 195–196; Congressional aspirations, 266, 269; elected to Congress, 271; introduces Lincoln at his inauguration, 494.

Baker, L. B.—Relates details of burial of Booth, 625–626.

Bedell, Grace—Relates incident of Lincoln and his whiskers, 487–488.

Beecher, Henry Ward—Discourse of, on the death of Lincoln, 572.

Bissell, William H.—Nominated governor of Illinois, 383; elected, 389.

Black Hawk War—Account of, 92-93.

Bliss, J. S.—Relates incident of visit to Lincoln, 470–471.

Bloomington—Convention in, and call for same, 621–622.

Bogue, Captain Vincent—Brings the *Talisman* to Illinois, 86–87.

Booth, John Wilkes--Assassinates Lincoln, 563—567; escape, capture, and death of, 574–579; burial of, 625–626.

Browning, O. H.—Speaks in Springfield church, 192.

Buchanan, James—Present at Lincoln's inaugural, 493–494.

Butterfield, Justin N.—Appointed Commissioner of Land Office, 301.

CALHOUN, JOHN—Appoints Lincoln Deputy Surveyor, 119–121; speaks in church, 192.

Calk, William—Emigrates from Virginia to Kentucky, 8.

Campbell, A.—Contributes money to pay Lincoln's campaign expenses, 402.

Cartwright, Peter—Race of, for Congress against Lincoln, 272–273.

Chicago,—Convention in, 461–462.

Conkling, James C.—Letter of, to J. W. Weik, 550; Lincoln's letter to, in answer to "Unconditional Union" men, 550—555.

Crawford, Elizabeth—Recollections of Lincoln's early poetry, 47; school exhibitions, 47–48.

Crawford, Josiah ("Blue Nose")—Loans Lincoln "Weems' Life of Washington," 40.

DAVIS, DAVID—Eulogy of, on Lincoln, 335–336; recalls Lincoln's religious views, 441; appointed judge of Supreme Court, 504–505; opinion of Bancroft's eulogy on Lincoln, 517; opinion of Lincoln's action in the military trials in the Northern and Border states, 556.

Decatur—Convention in, 460–461.
Defrees, John D.—Recalls Lincoln's views on the recognition of God in the Constitution, 444.
Dickey, T. Lyle—Relates incident of Lincoln's utterances at the Bloomington convention, 399.
Dickson, W. M.—Furnishes account of Lincoln's visit to Cincinnati, 353–356.
Douglas, Stephen A.—First meeting of, with Lincoln, 163; elected to the legislature, 173; takes part in debate in Springfield church, 192; pays his addresses to Mary Todd, 210–211; speech at Illinois State, Fair, 367; breach of agreement with Lincoln, 374; speech at reception in Chicago, July 9, 1858, 401; accepts Lincoln's challenge for joint debate, 402–403; contrasted with Lincoln, 403; lawyer and orator, 404; in the debate with Lincoln, 409–413; article of, in "Harper's Magazine," 450; speeches of, in campaign of 1860, 464; last meeting with Lincoln, 539.
Dresser, Rev. Charles N.—Marries Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd, 228.
Dresser, Thomas W., M. D.—Attends Mrs. Lincoln in her last illness, 434–435.
Dubois, Jesse K.—Recalls Lincoln's "house-divided-against-itself" speech, 397.
Duncan, John—Aids Lincoln to capture ground-hog, 18.

Edwards, Ninian W.—In the debate with Early, 169; elected to the legislature, 172.
Edwards, Mrs. Ninian W.—Visits the Lincolns in Washington, 508–509.
Elkin, David—Preaches funeral of Lincoln's mother, 28.
English, R. W.—Acts as mutual friend in Lincoln-Shields duel, 255.

Fell, Jesse W.—Applies to Lincoln for his autobiography, 4–5; recalls Lincoln's religious views, 442–446.
Francis, Simeon—Wife of, reconciles Lincoln and Mary Todd, 226.

Gentry, Allen—Accompanies Lincoln on flat-boat to New Orleans, 63.
Gentry, James—Buys Thomas Lincoln's farm, 67.
Gentryville—Life and social customs in, 63–64; superstitions of people in, 65–66.
Giddings, Joshua R.—In Congress with Lincoln, 291; letter from, to Lincoln, 386.
Gillespie, Joseph—Gives account of senatorial election of 1854, 377.
Gollaher, Austin—Rescues Lincoln from drowning, 18.
Graham, Mentor—First meeting of, with Lincoln, 79; Anne Rutledge attends school of, 131.
Greene, William G.—Assists Lincoln in Offut's Store, 81; sells Radford's store to Lincoln & Berry, 107-108.
Grimshaw, Jackson—Recollections by, of the first meeting to propose Lincoln for the Presidency, 453.

Hall, James—Meeting of, with Denton Offut in Baltimore, 85–86.
Hanks, Abraham—Journeys with William Calk to Kentucky, 8.
Hanks, Dennis—Birth of, 13; accompanies the Sparrows to Indiana from Kentucky, 21; his account of Thomas Lin-

coln's farm, 21–22; hunts game with Abe, 22; visits the President in Washington, 517–520.

Hanks, John—Welcomes the Lincoln family to Illinois, 69; helps Abe to split rails, 70; accompanies Lincoln and John Johnston to New Orleans, 72–74.

Hanks, Nancy—Her descent, 3; what her son said of her, 4; her marriage to Thomas Lincoln, 5; description of her person, 13; her mental qualities, 13–14; her death, 27–28.

Hardin, John J.—Appears as mutual friend in Lincoln-Shields duel, 255; nominated Congressman, 269.

Hay, John—Accompanies Lincoln to Washington, 485; his account of Lincoln's life at the White House, 514–517.

Haycraft, Samuel—Invites Lincoln to visit Kentucky, 7; describes the courtship and marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Sarah Bush Johnston, 29.

Hazel, Caleb—Lincoln attends school of, 16.

Head, Rev. Jesse—Marries Thomas Lincoln to Nancy Hanks, 5.

Herndon, Archer G.—Elected to Legislature, 172.

Herndon, Rowan—With Lincoln pilots the *Talisman*, 90; sells his store interest to Lincoln, 106.

Herndon, William H.—Meets Lincoln for the first time, 181; leaves the Jacksonville college, 187; clerks in Speed's store, 188; meets Mary Todd, 209; forms partnership with Lincoln, 266; discusses slavery with Lincoln in the law-office, 363–364; writes editorials in the *Springfield Journal*, 367–369; recalls the article in the *Conservative*, 369–371; advises Lincoln to avoid the Abolitionists, 371-372; describes Lincoln and his speech at Bloomington convention, 384–385; visits New York and New England in Lincoln's interests, 392; interviews Trumbull, Douglas, Seward, Greeley, Beecher, and others, 393–394; the Boston letter to Lincoln, 394–395; takes part in the campaign of 1860, 465; visits Lincoln in Washington, 506–508; recalls Lincoln's idea of war, 622–623.

Hill, Samuel—Burns Lincoln's Book on religion, 439–440.

Holland, Dr. John G.—Visits Springfield, 582–583.

Irwin, B. F.—Testimony of, regarding truce between Lincoln and Douglas, 621.

Jayne, Julia M.—Attends Mary Todd at her wedding, 228; assists in writing the "Rebecca" letters, 233–243.

Johnson, Andrew—Elected Vice-President, 555.

Johnston, John—Accompanies Lincoln and John Hanks to New Orleans, 74–75.

Johnston, Matilda—Incident of, with her step-brother Abe, 33–34.

Lamborn, Josiah—Speaks in Springfield church, 192.

Lamon, Ward H.—Accompanies Lincoln to Washington, 485–490.

Letters—Scripps to Herndon, 2; Lincoln to Haycraft, 7; Claggett to Herndon, 10; Pirtle to Herndon, 10; Helm to Herndon, 14–15; J.

R. to W. H. Herndon, 79–80; W. L. Wilson to Herndon, 97; George W. Harrison to Herndon, 98–100; Joseph S. Wilson to Herndon, 101; Mary S. Vineyard (*nee* Owens) to Herndon, 148–150; Lincoln to Mary S. Owens, 152–155; Lincoln to Mrs. O. H. Browning, 157–161; Lincoln to editor *Sangamon Journal*, 166; Lincoln to Col. Robert Allen, 168–169; Speed to Herndon, 218; Lincoln to Speed, 219–225; James H. Matheney and Thomas W. Dresser to Jesse W. Weik, 228; "Mr. Printer" from "Rebecca ——," 233–242; John D. Whiteside to editor *Sangamon Journal*, 243–247; E. H. Merryman to editor *Journal*, 248–259; Lincoln to Speed, 259–260; Lincoln to R. S. Thomas, 267; Lincoln to Herndon, 281–286, 291–293; Lincoln to office-seeker, 293–294; Elizabeth Sawyer to J. W. Weik, 301; Lincoln to Speed, 313; Lincoln to Justice M' Lean, 314; Lincoln to J. M. Brockman, 324; Lincoln to H. Keeling, 326; Grant Goodrich to Herndon, 330–331; Lord to Herndon, 345–346; John H. Bryant to Herndon, 374; Lincoln to Robert Mosely, 375; Lincoln to Jacob Harding, 376; Joseph Gillespie to Herndon, 377; Lincoln to Speed, 381; Joshua R. Giddings to Lincoln, 386; Lincoln to Harrison Maltby, 388; Horace Greeley to Herndon, 391; Lyman Trumbull to Lincoln, 392–393; Herndon to Lincoln, 394–395; T. Lyle Dickey to Herndon, 399; A. Campbell to Lincoln and to J. W. Weik, 402; Lincoln to J. O. Cunningham, 409; Horace Greeley to Lincoln and to Herndon, 413; Lincoln to Henry and to Asbury, 414; Horace White to Herndon, 417–418; Lincoln to John E. Rosette, 429; Thomas W. Dresser to Jesse W. Weik, 434–435; Joseph Gillespie to Herndon, 435; J. G. Nicolay, to Herndon, 442; Jesse W. Fell to Ward Lamon, 442–445; John D. Defrees to Herndon, 444; Lincoln to Norman B. Judd, 447; Whitney to Herndon, and Lincoln to Morris, 448–449; Lincoln to Delahay, 451–452; Lincoln to Pickett, 452; Grimshaw to Herndon, 453; Lincoln to Kansas delegate, 457–459; Lincoln to George Ashmun, 466; J. S. Bliss to Herndon, 470–471; Lincoln to J. R. Giddings, 471–472; Henry Wilson to Herndon, 474–477; Lincoln to his stepmother, 481; Lincoln to Grace Bedell, 487; Lincoln to L. Montgomery Bond and to Samuel Haycraft, 489; Lincoln to Calvin Truesdale and to Wash. Talcott, 498–499; Lincoln to Herndon, 500; Leonard Swett to Herndon, 502–505; Mrs. Mary Lincoln to Herndon, 510–511; John Hay to Herndon, 514–517; David Davis to Herndon, 517; Speed to Herndon, 521–528; Leonard Swett to Herndon, 528–538; Whitney to Herndon, 539–541; Robert L. Wilson to Herndon, 541–543; James C. Conkling to Jesse W. Weik, 549–550; Lincoln to James C. Conkling, 550–555; Lincoln to General Sherman, 557–558; J. M. Ashley to

Lincoln, and Lincoln to Ashley, 559; Robert Dale Owen to Herndon, 606; Lincoln to his father, 613; to his brother (John D. Johnston) 614–615, 616–618; Lincoln to A. Jonas, 623–624.

Lincoln, Abraham (*President's Grandfather*) — Emigrates from Virginia to Kentucky, 7; killed by the Indians, 9.

Lincoln, Abraham—Birth of, 1; modesty regarding origin, 1; interview with J. L. Scripps, 2; ride with Herndon to Menard County in 1850, 3; reference to his mother, 3; record in Bible, 4–5; Kentucky stories regarding his paternity, 5; investigation of same by J. W. Weik, 6; the Inlow story, 6; the coon story, 22–23; at Dorsey's school 34–35; at Crawford's school, 36–37; his school essays, 37; his gallantry to Kate Roby, 38; boyhood books, 39–40; early poetry, 40–41; methods of study, 42–43; intellectual traits, 44; early attempts at public speaking, 45; participates in the Johnston-Grigsby fight, 46; marriage of his sister Sarah, 48; writes a wedding song, 49; the "Chronicle of Reuben," 50–53; also satirizes William Grigsby, 55; attends court at Booneville, 58; his injury at Gordon's mill, 59–60; writes essays on Government and Temperance, 61; borrows law-books of John Pitcher, 61–62; makes his first flat-boat trip to New Orleans, 63; removes to Illinois, 68; his pet dog, 68; splits the rails with John Hanks, 70; speech in answer to Posy, 71; meets Denton Offut, 72; aids in building and launching the boat, 72–73; starts down stream for New Orleans, 74; the delay at New Salem, 74; loads hogs, 75; arrives in New Orleans, 76; witnesses sale of slaves, 76; returns to Illinois, 76; reappears in New Salem 78–79; tells the lizard story, 80; clerks in Offut's store, 80–81; wrestles with Jack Armstrong, 83; studies in the store, 84–85; meets the *Talisman* at Beardstown, 87; assists Rowan Herndon as pilot of the *Talisman*, 89; becomes a piece of floating driftwood, 92; captain of company in Black Hawk War, 93–94; his company, 94–95; under arrest, 95; defends the Indian, 96; wrestles with Thomson, 96–97; incidents of the campaign, 97–99; re-enlists as a private, 99–100; return to New Salem, 100–101; candidate for the legislature, 102; the canvass, 103–104; first political speech, 104–105; advocates the improvement of the Sangamon river, 105; defeated, 105; forms partnership with Berry in store, 106; their operations, 107–108; failure, 109; begins the study of law, 110; application and habits of study, 111–112; love for story-telling, 113–114; more poetry, 115; what A. Y. Ellis recollected of him, 115–116; referee in the McNabb cock fight, 118; deputy surveyor under Calhoun, 119–121; appointed postmaster at New Salem, 123; property sold to satisfy Van Burgen judgment, 123; comes to the aid of Chandler, 124–125; feats of strength, 125–

126; elected to the Legislature, 126–127; courts Anne Rutledge, 128–135; her death, 138; its effect on his mind, 139–140; Bowlin Green's kindness, 140; learns the lines, "O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?" 140; letter to Dr. Drake, 141; meets Mary Owens, 143–144; courtship, 146; letters to her, 151–155; letter to Mrs. O. H. Browning, 157–161; first term in the Legislature, 162; first meeting with Stephen A. Douglas, 163; his part of the legislation, 164; deputy surveyor under Thomas M. Neale, 164; candidate for the Legislature again, 165; the handbill favors "Woman's Rights," 166; letter to Col. Robert Allen, 168–169; the canvass, 169–170; reply to George Forquer, 171–172; elected and leads his ticket, 172; one of the "Long Nine," 173; champions internal improvements, 174–176; secures removal of the capital to Springfield 176–177; signs the protest with Dan Stone, 178–180; begins pratice with John T. Stuart. 182–183; how their office looked, 184; finds a warm friend in Joshua F. Speed, 185; boards with William Butler, 185; in Speed's store, 187; poetry, 189; speech before the Young Men's Lyceum, 190; speech in Presbyterian church, 192; nominated speaker in the Legislature of 1838, 193; stumps the district with Dick Taylor, 194–195; defends Edward D. Baker, 195–196; caricatures Jesse B. Thomas, 197–198; in the campaign of 1840—elector on the Presidential ticket, 198; again elected to the Legislature, 199; caucus nominee of Whigs for speaker, 199; meets Mary Todd, 209; the midnight of gloom, 215; goes with Speed to Kentucky, 216–217; letters to Speed, 219–225; meets and becomes reconciled at house of Simeon Francis, 226–227; the Shields letters in the *Springfield Journal*, 233–243; the duel with Shields, 243–260; delivers a temperance speech, 260–262; meets Martin Van Buren, 262–263; becomes law partner of Stephen T. Logan, 264; congressional aspirations, 265; dissolves partnership with Logan and takes in William H. Herndon, 266; letters to Speed and Thomas, 267–269; speaks in Indiana during campaign of 1844, 270; nominated for Congress against Peter Cartwright, 272; elected, 272–273; takes his seat in Congress, 274; letter to Herndon, 275; introduces "Spot" resolutions, 277; opposes Mexican war—explains his position in letters to Herndon, 277–286; speaks in Congress, 287–290; stumping through New England, 290–291; early married life, 295–296; at Niagara Falls, 296–297; invents the apparatus to lift boats over shoals, 298–299; candidate for Commissioner of Land Office, 300; is offered territorial posts by President Taylor, 302; an interesting stage-ride to Washington, 302–306; returns to the law, 307–308; life on the circuit, 310–331; methods of study, 332–338; his mind, 339; speech in the

Wright case, 340–342; defends the ladies, 343–344; trials and incidents on the circuit, 345–351; the suit against the Illinois Central railroad, 351–352; meets Edwin M. Stanton, 353–356; defends William Armstrong, 357–359; last law-suit—dinner at Arnold's in Chicago, 359–360; speaks before the Scott Club, 361; talks with John T. Stuart, 363; reads political literature, 363–364; anti-slavery ideas, 366–367; answers Douglas, 367–369; condemns the article in the *Conservative*, 369–370; escapes from the Abolitionists, 371–372; follows Douglas, 373; election to and resignation from the Legislature, 375; letter from, to a newspaper man, 376; a candidate for U. S. Senator in the Legislature, 377; appears before the Governor of Illinois in behalf of a negro, 378–379; speech in behalf of the Free-Soil cause, 379–380; an interesting letter to Speed, 381; speaks at the Bloomington convention, 383–384; also at the Springfield ratification, 385–386; stumps the state, 386; demands for him from outside, 387; endeavors to counteract the Fillmore movement, 388; growth of his political reputation, 390; feels the injustice of Greeley's treatment, 391; his dejection, 392; reads Theodore Parker's sermons, 396; in the Republican convention of 1858, 396; nominated U. S. Senator, 396–397; prepares "house-divided-against itself" speech, 397; reads it to friends in State Library, 399–400; delivers it in the convention, 400; challenges Douglas, 401–402; applies to A. Campbell for funds, 402; description of, on the stump, 405–408; real position on the slavery question, 409–410; incidents of debate and results, 411–413; letters from Greeley, 413; letters to Henry and Asbury, 414; extract from speech, 415–416; his domestic delinquency, 423–425; family government, 426–427; curious letter to Rosette 429; carries his burdens in silence, 429–432; part played by his wife, 432–434; his superstitious nature, 435–436; estimate of biography, 437; writes a book against the Christian religion at New Salem, 439–440; testimony of friends regarding his religious views, 440–445; financial result of debate with Douglas, 447–448; attempts to lecture, 448–449; enters campaign in Ohio, 449–450; visits Kansas, 451; meeting of his friends to propose him for the Presidency, 452–453; delivers "Cooper Institute" speech, 453–455; speaks in New England, 456; fastens his eye on Seward, 457; writes interesting letters to a delegate, 458–459; attends the convention at Decatur, 460–461; receives news of his nomination 463; accepts the nomination, 463–464; in the campaign, 464–465; occupies room in State House, 466; casting his ballot, 467; struggles with office-seekers, 469–470; ratifies the agreements made at Chicago, 471–472; forms his cabinet, 473–474; visits Chicago and meets Speed, 477; prepares his inaugural address, 478–479; parts from

his step-mother, 480; last days in Springfield, 482; last interview with his law partner, 482–485; departs from Springfield, 485; journey to Washington, 487–491; inaugurated, 492–497; in the White House, 498; letters to friends, 498–500; disposes of claims of David Davis, 501–505; life in the White House, 514–517; recollections of his conduct as President by Joshua F. Speed, 524–529; by Leonard Swett, 529–538; meets Douglas for last time, 539; his self-reliance, 540; how he viewed the battle of Bull Run, 541–545; comprehends the scope of the war, 546; issues the Emancipation Proclamation, 547-549; writes letter to J. C. Conkling, 550–555; renominated and re-elected, 555–558; second inaugural, 559–560; visits the army, 560–561; views the dawn of peace, 562–563; the assassination, 564–568; funeral in Springfield, 572–573; effect of his death, 579–580; his place in history, and the lesson of his life, 580–581; description of his nature by Dr. Holland, 582–584; estimate of, by a fellow lawyer, 584; description of person by Herndon, 585–588; theory of his melancholy, 588; recalled by a neighbor, 589–590; analysis of mind and character, 590–609; the man for the hour, 611; how he answered the Know-Nothing charge, 623–624; his views on the rights of suffrage, 625.

Lincoln, Josiah—Present at death of his father, 9.

Lincoln, Mary—Birth and descent, 206-207; mind and characteristics, 208–209; meets Lincoln, 209; receives addresses of Douglas, 209–210; also of Lincoln, 212–214; disappointed by Lincoln, 214–215; the reconciliation, 226–227; the marriage, 228–229; with assistance of Julia Jayne, writes "Rebecca" letters, 233–243; accompanies husband to Washington, 296; contrasted with her husband, 426–427; married life, 427–431; the unintentional means of her husband's promotion, 432–433; her conduct and her death, 434; letter to Herndon, 510–511; her account of her husband's nature and conduct at the White House, 511–514.

Lincoln, Nancy—(*See* Nancy Hanks).

Lincoln, Sarah—Birth of, 5; mistake in name of, 5; appearance and disposition, 16; marries Aaron Grigsby, 16; accompanies her brother Abe to school, 16; death of, 50.

Lincoln, Sarah (Sarah Bush Johnston)—marries Thomas Lincoln, 29; cares for Thomas Lincoln's children, 30–31; death of, 32.

Lincoln, Thomas—Description of, 11; religious belief, 11–12; occupation and traits, 12; dissatisfied with Kentucky, 18; moves to Indiana, 19–20; how the family lived, 23–24; his widowerhood, 28; marries Sarah Bush Johnston, 29; removes to Illinois, 67–68; death of, 70–71.

Littlefield, John H.—Relates experiences as law-student in Lincoln & Herndon's office, 315–319.

Logan, Stephen T.—Becomes law partner of Lincoln, 264; has Congressional aspira-

tions, 265; style of dress exposed by Lincoln, 357.

MATHENEY, JAMES H.—Recollects some Lincoln poetry, 188–189; recalls incidents of Hoffman's row, 189; attends Lincoln as best man at the marriage to Mary Todd, 228.

Mather, Thomas—Visits General Scott in the interest of Lincoln, 492–493.

McClellan, George B.—Defeated by Lincoln for President in 1864, 555–556.

McDonald, Joseph E.—Recalls the Wyant case, 344; visits Lincoln in 1865, 556–557.

McGaughey, Edward W.—Competitor of Lincoln for Commissioner of Land Office, 300.

McNamar, John—Helps Lincoln prepar handbill, 102; courts Anne Rutledge, 132; journeys to New York, 133–134; recollections of Anne Rutledge, 136.

Merryman, E. H.—Lincoln's second in the duel with Shields, 248; his account of the duel, 248–259.

Minier, George W.—Relates an incident of the circuit, 619–620.

NELSON, THOMAS H.—Rides in the stage with Lincoln, 303–306.

New Salem—Description of, 77–78; society of, 116–117.

Nicolay, John G.—Letter of, regarding Lincoln's religious views, 442; is appointed Lincoln's private secretary, 466; accompanies him to Washington, 485.

OFFUT, DENTON—Meets Lincoln, 72; his business ventures in New Salem, 81–83; disappears, 85; reappears in Baltimore, 86.

Oliphant, E. P.—Lines of, celebrating the arrival of the *Talisman*, 88–90.

Owens, Mary S.—Meets Lincoln, 143; described, 144–145; letters to W. H. Herndon, 148–150; her estimate of Lincoln, 161.

PINKERTON, ALLAN—Unearths conspiracy to prevent Lincoln's safe journey to Washington, 491–492.

Pitcher, John—Loans Lincoln law-books, 61.

RICKARD, SARAH—Is courted by Lincoln, 230.

Riney, Zachariah—Lincoln attends school of, 16.

Robey, Kate—In school with Lincoln, 38; watches the moon, 39.

Rutledge, Anne—Her parentage and descent, 129; the affair with John McNamar, 130–135; devotion of Lincoln to, 137; death, 138.

SCRIPPS, J. L.—Narrates particulars of interview with Lincoln, 2.

Shields, James—Auditor of State, 231–232; challenge to Lincoln, and duel, 248–251.

Simpson, Bishop Matthew—Delivers oration at Lincoln's funeral, 573.

Sparrow, Thomas and Betsy—Emigrate from Kentucky to Indiana, 21; death of, 27.

Speed, Joshua F.—Meets Lincoln for the first time, 185; introduces Lincoln to Mary Todd, 209; account of the courtship, 212–213; letter to W. H. Herndon, 218; tribute to Lincoln, 521–528.

Springfield—Early society of,

182; court and bar of, 186; attitude of clergy toward Lincoln, 466–467; lawyers of, and Lincoln's colleagues at the bar, 620.

Stanton, Edwin M.—Meets Lincoln, 353–356.

Stephens, Alexander H.—What Lincoln thought of him, 282.

Stone, Daniel—Elected to Legislature, 172; protests with Lincoln against slavery resolutions, 178–180.

Stuart, John T.—Admits Lincoln to partnership, 183; endeavors to retard Lincoln in his movement toward abolitionism, 382–383; statement of, regarding Lincoln's religious views, 440–441.

Swett, Leonard—Describes Lincoln arguing a case, 334; interests himself in the cause of David Davis, 502–505; describes Lincoln, 528–538.

TALISMAN, THE—History and disappearance of, 86–91.

Thomas, Jesse B.—Speech in Springfield church, 192; is caricatured by Lincoln, 197–198.

Todd, Mary—(*See* Mary Lincoln).

Trumbull, Lyman—Elected senator, 377.

Turnham, David—Accompanies Abe Lincoln to mill, 24–25; loans him "Revised Statutes of Indiana," 45.

VAN BUREN, MARTIN—Meeting of with Lincoln, 262–263.

WEIK, JESSE W.—Investigates stories of Lincoln's parentage, 5–6.

Weldon, Lawrence—Tribute to Lincoln, 626–627.

White, Horace—Recollects Lincoln's speech at Beardstown, Ill., 417–418.

Whiteside, John D.—Acts as Shields' second in the duel with Lincoln, 243; account of duel, 243–247.

Whitney, Henry C.—Describes Lincoln on the circuit, 349–351; accompanies Lincoln in debate with Douglas, 412; conception of the rebellion, 543–546.

Wilson, Henry—Reminiscences of Lincoln, 474–477.

Wilson, Robert L.—Recalls battle of Bull Run, 541–543.

DATE DUE

3 3645 00012561 0

E457 .H57
v.3
Herndon, William Henry,
1818-1891.
Herndon's Lincoln; the true
story of a great life ...
The history and personal

Dominican College Library
San Rafael, California